



INTRODUCING

MODERN MUSE LE ROUGE

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M O D E R N M U S E LE ROUGE

ESTĒE LAUDER

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Collection from £49



(antents

OCTOBER 2015

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CLINIQUE

DAISY DREAM MARC JACOBS



RANDOM OF THE MONTH Tell us something not many people know about you



"I used to write erotic A1 fan fiction when I was 14.'

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feet. It's like fresh popcorn."



"As a student, I had a parttime job dancing on a bar in a bikini, chaps and a cowboy hat, Coyote Ugly-style."



"I've never seen Star Wars. Seriously.'



"Someone did a show

about me at the

Edinburgh Fringe based

on my resemblance

to Alan Davies"

"I have a single pesky chest hair. My sister calls it Dave."

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Underneath it all she wears

GUCCI BAMBOO

The new fragrance for her





MICHAELIS My first month at Cosmopolitan... ABOVE: Me with US Cosmopolitan Editor-In-Chief, Joanna Coles BELOW: Me with some of the US Cosmopolitan team. urday morning Look at that monochrome!

FROM THE EDITOR

Do you remember your first day at school? I bet you do. The odd, slightly skittish way your stomach felt as you rolled up and your mum let go of your clammy little hand. The creeping, totally unfounded paranoia you experienced every time someone laughed ('It's about me, right? It's *definitely* about me'). The way you'd go home every night and think, 'When is it going to feel *right?*'

I've got news for you... those feelings never go away.

I felt the same way when I took over editing *Cosmopolitan* a few weeks back. Even though you're the boss, you still worry you're walking around with toilet paper stuck to the bottom of your shoe, or that you've 'over-laughed' at someone's joke (not cool) or, god forbid, you've unintentionally insulted the nicest person in the office. And then there's the big one: what will *Cosmopolitan* readers – the legions of you we spend our waking hours thinking about – make of it all?

Because, like most women do every now and then, we've reinvented a little. We've gone to the gym (see our new Move section, p107) and started

cooking too (head to our Play 'area' over on p205). We've gotten a bit more serious about fashion too (ever wondered how the hell to pull off a furry gilet? We have answers on p53) and, as for sex... well, just head straight to p187. That's all I'm saying. And money? We're interested in that too – namely making our own. Which is why I urge you to turn to p122 now, to see how social media can do a lot more for you than cat memes and dancing babies.

Like all new jobs, the past few weeks have been fun, totally eye-opening and, aside from the morning I actually *did* walk out of the communals with toilet paper stuck to my shoes (what are the chances?), not that scary after all.

Enjoy the issue!

FARRAH STORR

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BOSS

BOSS MA VIE

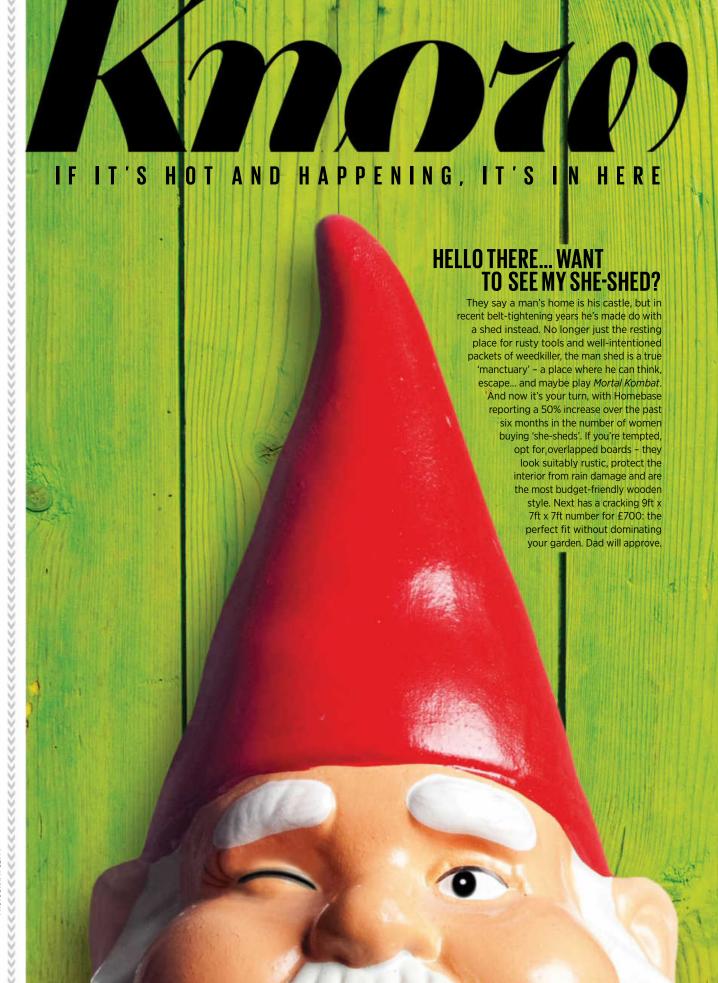
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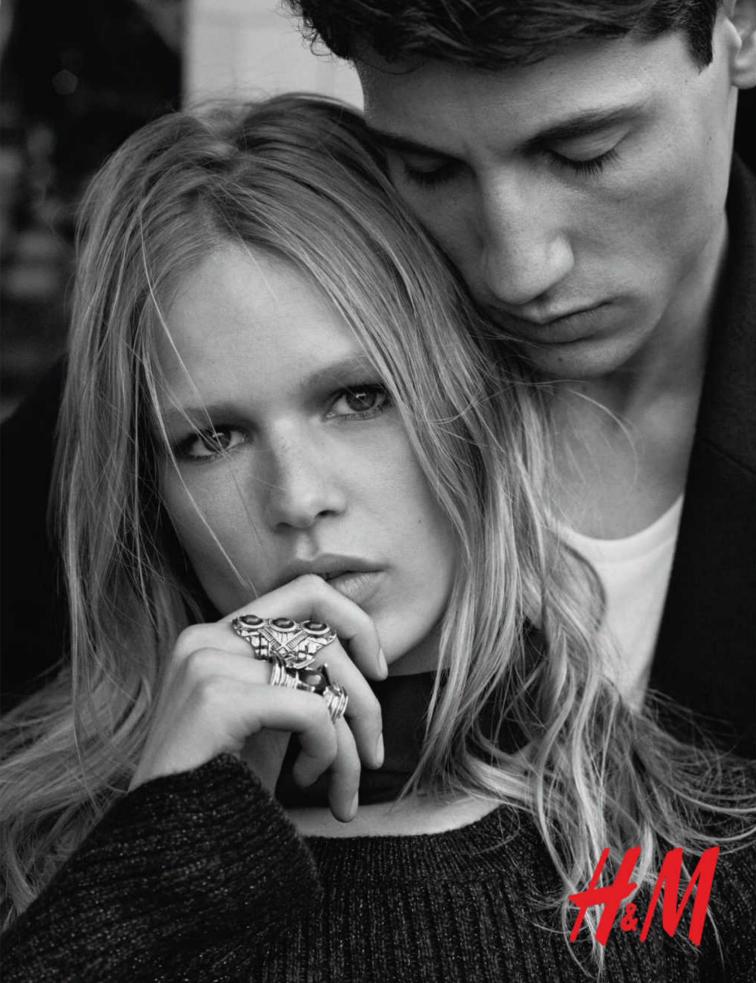
VERY EXCLUSIVE.CO.UK

















'What makes you special? Trust me, it's not how you look'

If you rely on your appearance to stop your partner going AWOL, you may get a nasty surprise, says JAMEELA JAMIL

iving in LA, I come across my fair share of distinctly not-average dating dilemmas. My best friend has just started seeing a musician – which is a dangerous move. Why? Because over the years, musicians have earned themselves quite the reputation when it comes to sleeping around.

While it's easy to judge, you really can't blame them. I've not only dated musicians in my time, but I've also been surrounded by them for the past six years. It's UN-FUCKING-BELIEVABLE the way women behave around men in bands.

Their talent affords them a sort of sex halo, which drives some women to distraction (and beyond). Some fans are terrifying when it comes to their brazen determination to get what they want. Even if the star has no personality or discernible intellect, these girls are up for it. And a lot are legitimately hot. Lethal combination.

You can't shrug and say musicians should practise some self-control, because it's just not a normal situation. They're away from home for weeks – sometimes months – at a time. Plus, they're lonely. And human.

Obviously some – including many I personally know – manage to exercise their inner monk when away from their women. But it's hard, both for them and their (very) trusting partners. It takes a lot of strength to kiss someone goodbye as they take off on the road to be fawned over by beautiful girls, without sticking a tracking device up their arse and tattooing a picture of your face on their penis.

I personally don't struggle too much with this. Part of this comes from the fact that I date exclusively >



BEAUTY OBSESSED

How America's preoccupation with looks stacks up

lovely guys. And the other part is that I made a conscious decision at the start of my twenties to have a good long talk with myself, asking, 'What is it about me that I like, and what's worth hanging on to? What is it that sets me apart from other women, that would be likely to make a man turn down a gaggle of hungry women, out of fear that he would lose me?'

I worked out pretty quickly that it wasn't my looks. Growing up, I was so oafish, I didn't have them to rely on, which set me in good stead for the rest of my life – because instead, I developed Me.

And now – yeah, sure, with enough tongs, concealer, contouring, mascara, eyeliner, bras, lipstick, special fringe arrangement, control pants and high heels I look alright. Don't we all? But I'm no supermodel. I wobble. I wake up looking like I've escaped a war. My tits have a mind of their own during sex. It's all a work in progress.

And so it's not only that my looks wouldn't be my USP. It's that they *shouldn't* be. If you think your looks are what makes you special, you are, for lack of a better word, screwed.

Because no matter how hot you are, there's always someone hotter

than you. And anyway, looks change and fade. The women you see strutting around LA plastered in makeup and patched up with youth-enhancing surgery were once the girls who thought it was *their* looks that snagged their man and their opportunities.

You should try to avoid that feeling, because it will only imprison you in a web of insecurity and doubt. And while we all kind of know this, it's hard not to place a value on looks. Yes, we're

17,000
THE NUMBER OF NAIL SALONS

HE NUMBER OF NAIL SALONS ACROSS AMERICA

8,000

OF WHICH ARE IN CALIFORNIA

of American women visit a beauty salon once a month.

15.6m

The number of cosmetic-surgery procedures carried out in the USA in 2014, 87% of which were on women.

taught about the perils of being shallow and vain from the minute we're born – but then for the rest of our lives we're force-fed passiveaggressive abuse by the media on

what we're supposed to look like: 'Bikini-body ready', 'Fix your "problem" areas', 'From flab to fab', blah blah blah blah. And more of us than we'd probably like to admit – myself included – are affected by this pressure. But while it's great to take pride in your appearance and look after yourself, it won't make you – or

anyone else – truly happy.

So taking looks out of the equation entirely, think about how happy you and your partner really are in your relationship. Unless they're a total lying sociopath, if someone is utterly fulfilled, it's highly unlikely they'd be arsed to look for gratification elsewhere. Why would you?

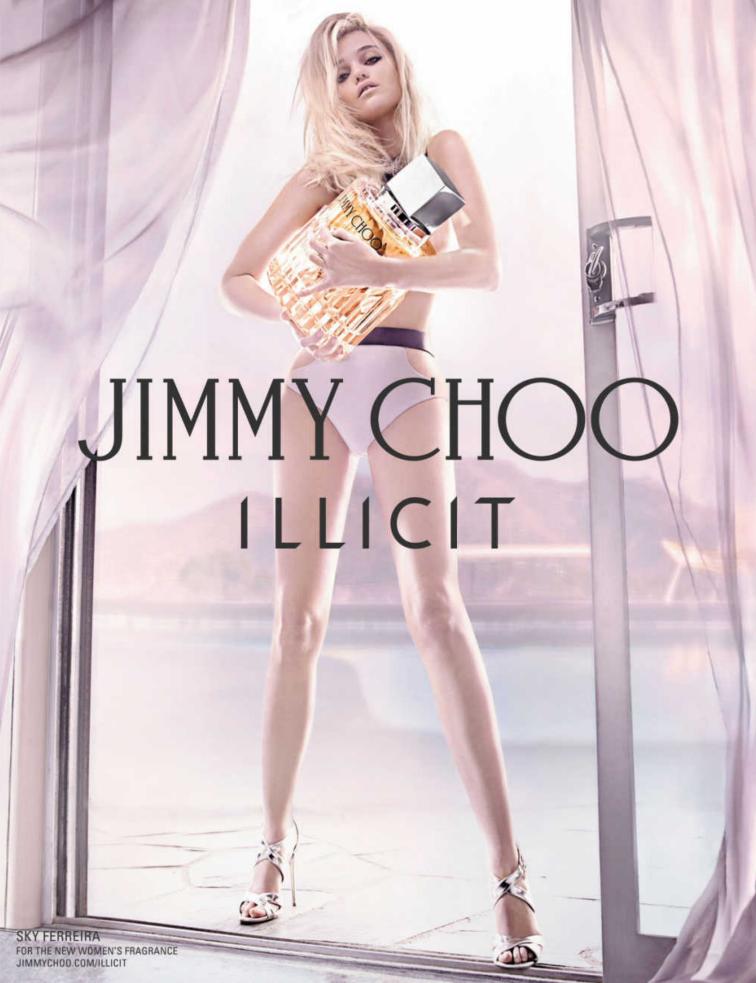
People who cheat are unhappy either with the union they're in, or unhappy with who they are and are looking for a pick-me-up. I've never seen a man who was truly happy in his love life stray. Paul Newman was asked how he stayed faithful to his wife when he was considered the most beautiful man alive - to which he simply answered, "Why would I go out for burgers when I have steak at home?" While this means that Mr Newman was a stand-up guy, it also means his wife was absolutely SMASHING IT at home. And they were truly in love.

If my best friend's going to survive the test of this union, she's going to have to dig deep and go for gold in order to maintain his focus. She'll need to constantly assess the temperature on how everything feels. Is he happy? Is *she* happy? Is the passion and excitement there?

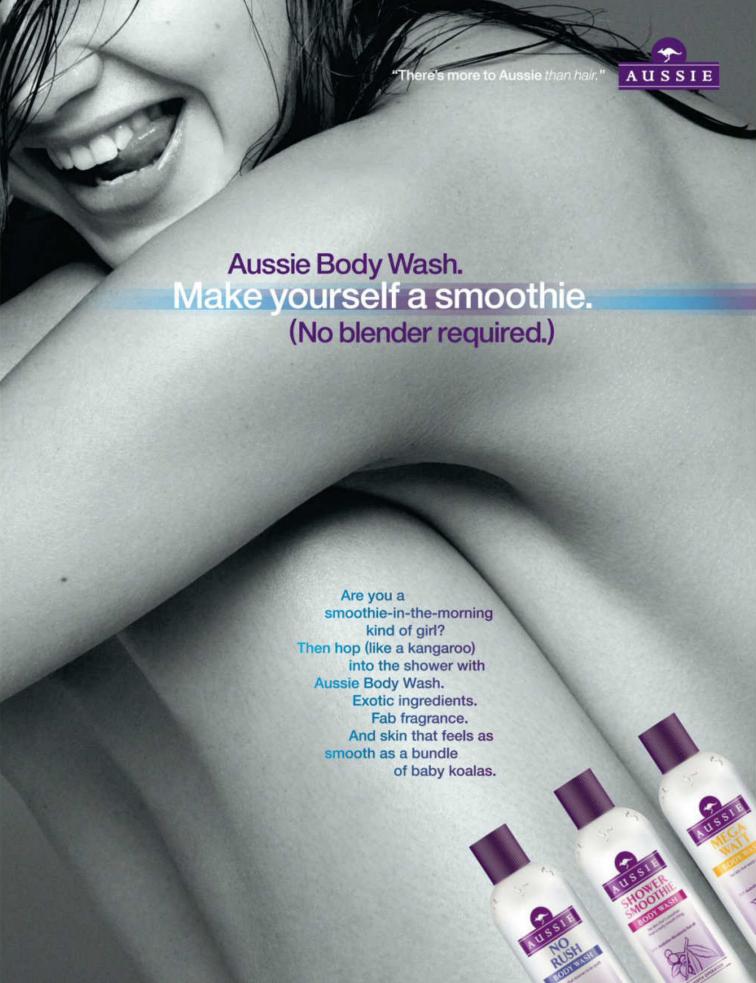
Now, I'm not remotely implying you do all the work to make your man happy. Just make sure you both meet each other's needs and that he's making the effort and going the distance to meet yours. That's love. That's the foundation upon which trust can lie and sleep well.

I give 100% in my relationships, way beyond the honeymoon phase. And if I feel like it's not coming back at me or I'm not being fully appreciated, I know I'm wasting my time. And I leave. There is no point sitting in paranoia and fear of losing someone. If you're giving them your best and you're *still* not sure, then get out. There's so much more fun to be had in the world – especially in LA, where all the hot musicians live... •

'It's not that my looks wouldn't be my USP. It's that they shouldn't be'









After dark nude

RITA ORA

Master the subtle new redcarpet lip trend in three steps

SUSS YOUR SKIN TONE Start by finding your skin's undertone with the jewellery test: if you suit gold it's likely you have a warm skin tone, while if silver's better on you, you're cool. Suit both? That means you're neutral. And lucky.





FIND YOUR NUDE

* YOU ARE Light

with cool undertones

LIKE Emily Blunt

REACH FOR Pink nude **WE LOVE** Rimmel London Lasting Finish Lipstick By Kate in 45, £5.49

***YOU ARE** Light with warm undertones LIKE Mila Kunis

REACH FOR Peach nude **WE LOVE** *Mac Lipstick in Peachstock, £15.50*

***YOU ARE** Olive with neutral undertones LIKE Rita Ora

REACH FOR Caramel nude **WE LOVE** Make Up Forever Rouge Artist Intense Lipstick in Satin Beige, £16

*YOU ARE Dark with neutral undertones LIKE Jourdan Dunn REACH FOR Chocolate nude

WE LOVE Dior Couture Colour Lipstick in Unique, £26.50

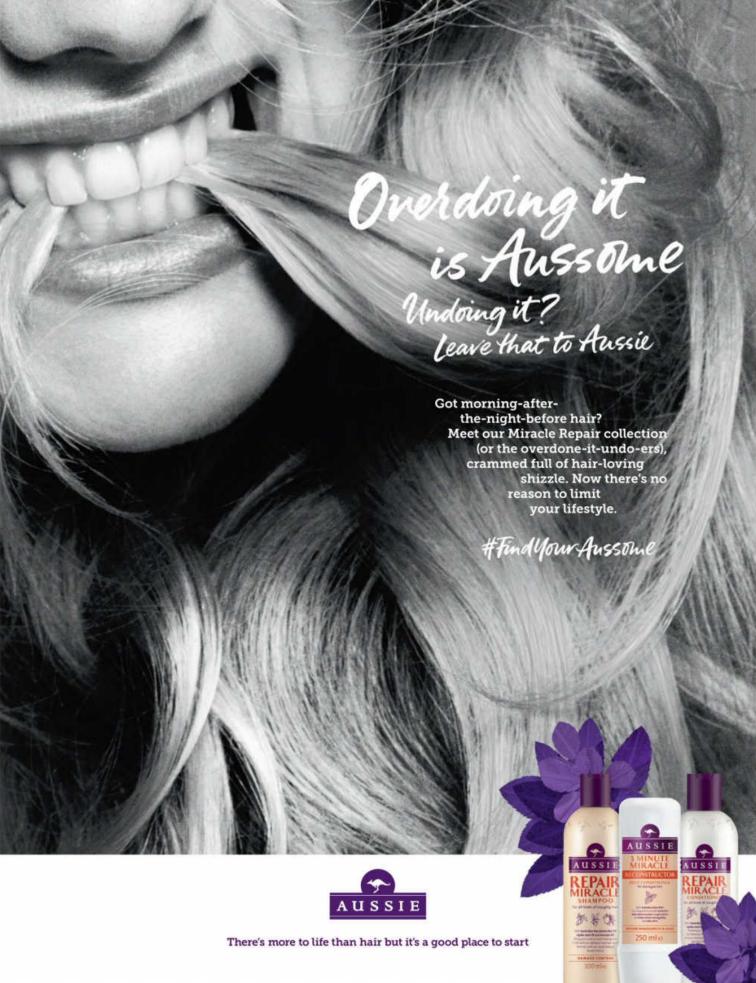


DAM

THE JOB
To make your pout look indecently plump, dab an unctuous, clear gloss on the pillowy centre of your lips.
WE LOVE L'Oréal Paris Top Gloss Push Up Volumizing Lip Top Coat, £6.99

28 · COSMOPOLITAN

JOURDAN DUNN





Introducing the new java script



We know, you look at the menu in your local coffee shop and feel like you need a PhD in beverage studies to understand it. And that's before you even think about the caffeine (400mg a day max) and calorie content. **SCOTT BENTLEY**, founder of *Caffeine* magazine, translates the trend



RECIPE 1 part espresso, 1 part steamed milk* The hipster's choice of drink; this
Spanish coffee is halfway between a single shot and a cappuccino. Smooth...



RECIPE Itsp matcha powder, Itbsp hot water, 235ml milk The health set go gaga for this creamy antioxidant-rich latte made from Japanese green tea.



RECIPE 1 part coffee, 8 parts water
The coffee beans in this cup of joe
have been brewed in cold H₂O for 18-24
hours, producing an *intense* hit.



RECIPE 1 part espresso, 1 part steamed milk and cream, 1 part foam A latte with a
twist – a steamy mix of half-and-half milk
and cream. Pronounced 'brev-ay'.



RECIPE 3 parts espresso, 2 parts water An Americano, but your barista adds a double espresso shot before topping it up with water – avoiding all the gross bits in the final gulp.



RECIPE 1 part espresso, 2 parts steamed milk

A bit like a latte, only with a little less milk.

A double shot of espresso topped with
microfoam milk, so you get a smooth texture.



RECIPE An Americano (1 part espresso, 3 parts water), 3 shots espresso From Starbucks' secret menu (ask your barista), drink *only* in the most sleep-deprived times.



RECIPE An espresso, topped with foamed milk Pronounce this one 'mah-key-ah-toh'.
Essentially an espresso with a dash of milk
to 'cut' through the coffee taste.



RECIPE 1 cup black coffee, 35ml grass-fed butter, 35ml MCT oil Coffee with fat? The
theory goes that you feel fuller for longer
and the caffeine is released more slowly.

When is the best time to drink coffee?

New research shows between 10am and noon or 2pm and 5pm are the prime windows for your daily caffeine hit. Drink it any earlier in the morning and it can interfere with the production of your body's natural awakening hormone. You've been warned.

THE SEARCH FOR YOUNGER LOOKING SKIN IS OVER.

1 CREAM, 100 AWARDS.



Olay Total Effects is a simple solution for younger looking skin.
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across the globe[†], it's all your skin needs. The 7-in-1 from the
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*Based on mass market facial moisturiser and cleanser value sales for past 12 months ending June 2014 *Based on number of awards received by Olay Total Effects boutique across the globe 2002-2014



YOUR BEST BEAUTIFUL™

The Pointing you in the right cultural direction this month...

oating our bo<mark>a</mark>

MUM TV

Strictly, the final throes of *Downton*... We'd love to pretend we have better weekend plans, but that would be a lie.

TIGHTS DENIAL

It may be 13.9°C outside, but in your heart it's summer. Newsflash: it's not. Crack out the 100 deniers and stop shivering.



POUTINE

Sounds like the Russian president but far tastier. This Canadian delicacy = chips, cheese and gravy. Coming to a street-food market near you.



ILYSM

Looks like a Countdown problem; means 'I love you so much'. The new, totally over-thetop way to profess your love.



SEAPUNK

Youth subculture scene du jour. Devotees go for blue or green hair. Best avoided if you saw Ghostbusters first time around though.



THE SHIRKOUT

'The shirking of a workout' - that girl who sets the treadmill to one hour, then spends it rearranging her Pinterest boards.

CUMBERSTITCHING

A new tome offering 15 cross-stitch patterns of the man himself means your fingers can get one step closer to Cumberbatch.



DAYCATIONS

It's come to our attention that the new hotel trend is booking a 'day use' room. A way to relax mid-shopping trip or the acceptable face of adultery? You decide.



BEING POSH

Steph & Dom's Guide To *Life* is the *Gogglebox*ers' manifesto. Want a career out of getting sloshed on the sofa in questionable slacks? This is your jam.



ONE DIRECTION ALBUM PANIC

Will Louis's nappy duty affect his vocal skills? What's Harry had tattooed now? Zero cares.



FILM **FOCUS**

Double take



This month, what could be better than TOM HARDY on screen? Two Tom Hardys on screen...

The opening of *Legend* (out 9 September) shows Tom Hardy in a car sitting next to... himself. In this surprisingly femalefriendly gangster movie, he plays both of the Kray twins during their '60s reign: Ronnie is pale, stocky and bespectacled, while Reggie is more of the Batman Tom we're

used to. Producer Chris Clark told Cosmopolitan that Tom said he'd only take the role if he could play both parts. Tom flipped from Reggie to Ronnie with makeup and prosthetics. The performances were then merged in post-production.

But proving your acting chops with a dual role is nothing new...

TWIN TIMELINE



THE SOCIAL NETWORK

Armie Hammer played both Tyler and Cameron Winklevoss in the Facebook film. But one was actor Josh Pence with Armie's face morphed onto him.



THE PARENT TRAP (REMAKE)

For her first film, 11-year-old Lindsay Lohan beat Scarlett Johansson (an ancient 13) to the role of separatedat-birth twins Annie and Hallie.



THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK

Leonardo DiCaprio played the evil King Louis XIV and Philippe, his secret, imprisoned twin. Sadly, even two Leos couldn't save this howler.





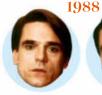
A STOLEN LIFE

Bette Davis starred as sisters fighting over one man in this one. Bitten by the twin bug, she did it again in 1964's Dead Ringer.



THE PARENT TRAP

Hayley Mills played twins Susan and Sharon in the Disney original. Her body double was so convincing her mum mistook her for her daughter.



DEAD RINGERS

In this drama, Jeremy Irons demanded separate dressing rooms and wardrobes to get into character as twin gynaecologists. Diva.



Everest (out 18 Sept)

Jake Gyllenhaal, Josh Brolin and Sam Worthington fight for their lives after a horrific snowstorm. Keira Knightley, Emily Watson and Robin Wright hope for their return. You'll like it if: You don't have a skiing holiday coming up.

2 Miss You Already of Already (25 Sept)

Best friends Milly (Toni Collette) and Jess (Drew Barrymore) find themselves put to the test when Milly gets critically ill - just as Jess gets pregnant.

You'll like it if: You don't mind the taste of your own tears.

(18 Sept)

Military man Brian (Bradley Cooper) reconnects with ex Tracy (Rachel McAdams), just as he starts to fall for fighter pilot Allison (Emma Stone). Tough call, Bradley.

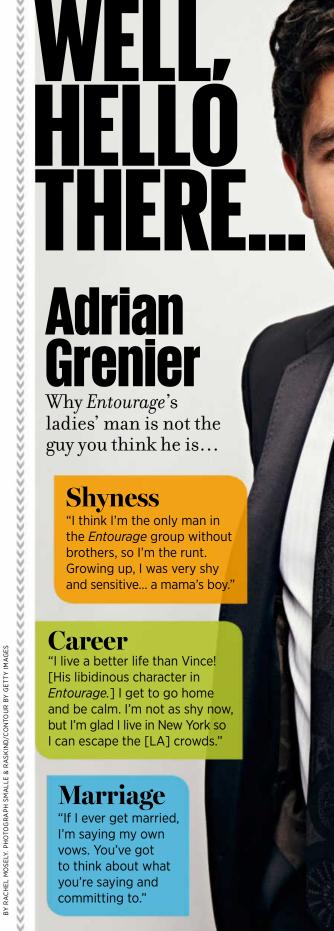
You'll like it if: Your Top Gun DVD is showing signs of wear.





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HIS VITALS

Know

Age 39

Home town Albuquerque, New Mexico

First major break...
Playing Anne
Hathaway's
luxuriantly coiffured
boyfriend in *The*Devil Wears Prada.

Crazy fact #1 He co-founded the Churchkey Can Company brewery.

Crazy fact #2 He's the lead singer of New York band Kid Friendly.

Women

"I like a confident, calm voice. You get a lot of insight into a person from their voice. And hygiene. I like a girl who flosses."

His turn-ons

"A lot of times, insecurities beget rejection. It's not about how good-looking you are; it's attractive when you love yourself."

* See Adrian in action in Entourage (the movie) out on DVD this month



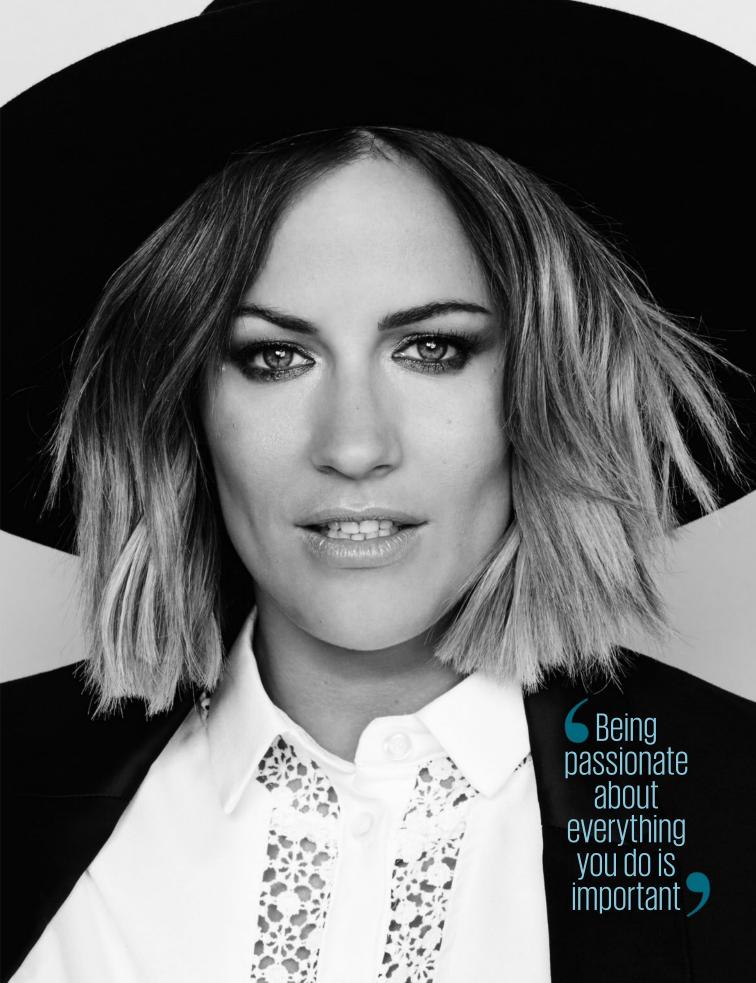
MAX FACTOR X



THE MAKE-UP OF MAKE-UP ARTISTS

From sidekick to centre $stage-how\ \mathbf{CAROLINE}$ FLACK pulled the best job in TV out of her hat WORDS SOPHIE GODDARD PHOTOGRAPHS BEN RIGGOTT





hree days after this interview, Caroline Flack – the twinkly-eved, perennially cheery, million-wordsa-minute presenter – tweeted a weekly magazine with two words: 'Fuck off'. Turns out it was something to do with an oversized leopard-print shirt she'd worn at the first round of X Factor auditions in Manchester, prompting the magazine to speculate whether she was pregnant. Later that day she uploaded an Instagram post in response: 'Dear whoever - I'm not pregnant,' she wrote underneath a screengrab of the outfit. 'I like loose-fitting clothing and I don't dress for you, I dress for me. It's also very personal and rude. I'm off to eat five burgers!' And there it was... a lighthearted but very defiant (and modern) two-fingers-up.

Within five minutes of meeting her, you'd know that this is the real Caroline Flack. Funny, yes, but also wonderfully feisty, brilliantly uncensored and frightfully normal ('Fill yourself with Glee, Jack', she tweeted back in December 2014, when ex-boyfriend Jack Street was rumoured to have become 'close' with Glee's Dianna Agron). She loves McDonald's, swigs cider at Glastonbury, and fills her socialmedia feed with things like, 'I will not stay out late. I will not stay out late. I will not stay out late...' Then, of course, stays out late.

The day we meet, news of the death of Simon Cowell's mother has just broken and Caroline's *X Factor* schedule has been thrown out of whack. She's fidgety, fiddling with the straw of her iced coffee, and checking her iPhone for news on the auditions. "Simon told me I reminded him of a student when we met," she says. "He said, 'You're very different from how I thought you'd be.' A lot of the girls he employs are really prim and

glamorous, and I was there with my hair piled up, wearing scruffy jeans. Maybe he liked that."

Clearly he did. Because it was Simon who offered Caroline the biggest – and arguably best – job in TV, co-presenting *The X Factor* with long-time friend and former *Xtra Factor* co-host, Olly Murs. Not that she knew she was being interviewed for it. "I didn't actually meet with Simon about the job," she admits. "We chatted, but it was just a general catch-up. We just talked about *Strictly* and bits and bobs... Dermot hadn't stepped down at that point, so I didn't know what it was even about."

Maybe it helped that Caroline wasn't intimidated by Forbes-rich-list-topping Cowell. "He's not scary, I get on with him," she shrugs when asked about his reputation. She gets why others are, though. "Yeah, it's funny – you can be in a room, then suddenly everything changes... and you realise he's just walked in. He has that presence. When you're talking to Simon, he makes you feel like everything you say is the best >

idea in the world. You walk away going, 'Well, that went well!' After our chat I remember thinking, 'Perhaps he's going to offer me a new show...' and he didn't!"

Not right away, anyway. But once Dermot stepped down in March, the job was hers. "When I found out, it was like when I got my first job. You think, 'Right, I've been given this opportunity, I need to do a good job.' Dermot was like that – five minutes before going on stage, he was as nervous as

I am – he was never smug or complacent about it." When I ask her what live TV is like, she pulls a face. "I still feel sick every time – I'm scared I'll get tongue-tied, fall over, forget my questions, the

"It's work that makes me really happy - not money"

autocue will stop... everything!"

But there's a steely confidence to Caroline, and she says she has her parents to thank for that. "I had a mum who said, 'You can do it!' There were definitely times when I thought, 'Oh, god, maybe this wasn't the right path for me. I remember phoning my mum once and saying, 'Mum, I don't think this is my career really.' She just said, 'Caroline, as long as you can get on with people and you're nice and confident, you can do anything you want. I thought, 'You know, I could.'"

Unlike winners of *The X Factor*, Caroline's wasn't an overnight success story. The way she talks matter-of-factly about the industry in general ("The ups and downs keep you going; you get used to knock-backs and just think, 'Right, on to the next!'") reminds you this is a woman who's been steadily plugging away at it for well over a decade, with a thicker skin than you might give her credit for. It wasn't until she was 26 – and finally landing regular TV

work – that Caroline felt confident enough to start referring to herself as a TV presenter. "Up until then, I'd work other jobs alongside TV," she remembers. "I was living in so many different houses at the beginning that my stuff was just in bin bags. Every time I left a house, I'd move back in with [her twin sister] Jody, then I'd find another house, then move back in with Jody again... it was like that until I was about 30."

But even then, it was tough carving a niche. "I always wanted

to be on *T4* when I was starting out – I ended up screen testing six times over the years, but didn't get it. I'd always go via this little pub on the corner and build myself up, looking over the script and overpreparing to the point where I was literally just reciting it. Although it was the job I wanted, maybe – thinking about the kind of

person I am now – it wasn't the right one for me. Perhaps I thought I was cooler than I was."

Developing a tough attitude early on was fortuitous, given that back in 2011 Caroline was on the receiving end of vitriol from millions of One Direction fans the world over [she was 31 when she famously dated 17-year-old Harry Styles for three months]. She laughs off the mention breezily. "The Harry thing doesn't bug me," she says in a casual but well-rehearsed voice. "People are interested in those sorts of things because they're in the public domain, so you just learn to laugh it off. It's funny; it's not serious - as long as I haven't gone down the street and mugged an old lady, I don't mind..."

That's Caroline's stance on most things – the view that it's 'all harmless, really, isn't it'. When it comes to *The X Factor*, and in particular the scrutiny the female judges – and now, no doubt, presenter – face every week for their outfit choices, she says, "I try not to >



CELEBRITY

buy into the whole thing too much. I just get dressed and hope for the best, really. Cheryl is that gorgeous, glamorousgown kind of girl, and I'm never gonna be that – it just isn't me. It's a case of sticking to what you know and what suits you. I'm 35 now -I know what I can and can't wear. I hate that 'Who wore it best' mentality, though. It's like, 'They're two totally different people!' It's a weird thing to do, to pitch people against each other and compare them."

Not that Caroline isn't used to comparisons.
Growing up in the tiny market town of Thetford in Norfolk, as a (non-identical) twin to sister Jody, she says it was her sibling who was singled out for stardom, not her. "I was outgoing in terms of drama and dancing, but teachers would say to

Jody, 'One day we'll see your

wasn't interested - she was

a bit too laid-back for it."

name in lights, Jo!' But she just

Their childhood was about as unstarry as it gets. "We were so far out of that world," she says. "When I went to dance school [after secondary school, Caroline studied musical theatre] you had to have the right outfit. I'd say to my mum, 'I need pink tights' and she'd go, 'Well, you don't have any'. So we got a white pair and put them in the washing machine with blackcurrant juice." The key, she says, was the self-

"I know what I can and can't

can and can't wear. I hate that 'Who wore it best' mentality"

belief her parents instilled in her.

When your twin sister has three children and you're "definitely single" (her words) it

must be hard not to consider how life could have been different. But it's not about choosing 'career or kids', she insists. "You definitely can have it all. When people say, 'I haven't got time for a relationship,' that's not true for me. I've *always* got time for a relationship. If you like someone, even if it's 2am and you've just finished work, then you get that lovely feeling where you want to see them for an hour... I've always got time for that."

Of course, dating in the limelight isn't easy and – Styles aside – Caroline

has been linked to everyone from Prince Harry to Iames Corden. "I could use Tinder," she says when I bring it up, "But I'm quite traditional when it comes to meeting people. It's a chemistry thing for me – you just instantly feel it or you don't." While she's open about her desire to start a family ("Yeah, looking at what my sister has, of course I think. 'I wish I had that...'"), she's not sure how successful she is at dating, and says, "Often I don't know whether I'm being chatted up... I can't tell!" But she doesn't think she's intimidating,

although she's clearly not afraid to go after what she wants. "When I met my last boyfriend [Jack], it was a stand-off of 'who's going to come over to who?' You get 'the look' don't you?" she laughs. "Well, we clocked each other, and I thought, 'He's never going to come over,' so I went to him. He still mentions it now, like, 'You came over to me,' she sighs, in mock protest.

While things with Jack didn't last, her career, clearly, is another story. "For me, when my relationships are going well, work isn't so busy. Then when I'm really busy with work, my relationships..." She trails off. "When I go through a break-up, my sister always says, 'You're going to get a great job now!' and it's usually true." With her new gig on *The X Factor*, it seems it's *definitely* true.

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All-in-one cleansing solution for sensitive skin.



"I won't use anything else."

Hayley Greenwood (Bedfordshire)

"Best ever for my sensitive skin."

Elaine Savage (Kent)

"It's magic...my new favourite cleanser."

Lynne B (Worcester)

The UK's No.1* Micellar Cleansing Water

What is It?

A smart 3 in 1 wonder. Removes make-up, cleanses and soothes. Designed for sensitive skin, its effective yet gentle formula is loved by all skin types.

How does it work?

The micelles (cleansing agents) within it act like 'dirt magnets', lifting away make-up and impurities in one step.

How do I use it?

Simply apply to a cotton pad and gently wipe across your skin.



STYLING RACHEL BAKEWELL, ASSISTED BY ELLE BRITT. HAIR AND MAKEUP GEMMA WHEATCROFT, USING GHD AND RODIAL. NAILS AMI STREETS FOR LMC WORLDWIDE. FIRST SPREAD: JUMPER, PAIGE DENIM, HAT, MAISON MICHEL, SECOND SPREAD: BLAZER, SAND. SHIRT, SISTER JANE. HAT, AS BEFORE, PREVIOUS PAGE: TOP, SANDRO

"Yes, it's a big job, but every job has felt like this. It was the Olly thing that sold it for me [though], I don't think I would have done it on my own."

"There have definitely been points where I've thought, 'Should I be thinking about a backup idea?' I think that even now. After doing Strictly I thought, 'Maybe theatre would be a good way to go, or working in production...'"

"This was a big turning point for me. I thought, 'I'm really gonna have to use what I've learnt for this one'."

"On this show, Colin
Murray taught me that
you have to become
an expert in everything.
He did a lot of
American-football
coverage, and had to
really clue himself up
on it. He said,
'Knowledge is power
- you've got to know
your subject, and
you have to love it.
Because if you don't
love it, it shows.'"

"Even though I didn't say anything, this is the job that changed everything. This was when I thought, 'Maybe I'll work in telly...'"

Caroline Flack

2015 Co-presenter, The X Factor with Olly Murs

2015 Presenter, Love Island

2014 Crowned champion of Strictly Come Dancing

2014 Presenter, Viral Tap

2013 Co-presenter, BAFTA red carpet with TV 'big brother' Dermot O'Leary

2011-2013 Co-presenter. The Xtra Factor with Olly Murs

2009-10 Presenter, I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here! NOW!

2009 Co-presenter, Gladiators with Ian Wright

2008 Presenter, Big Brother's Big Mouth

2007 Capital FM Breakfast Show cover as Johnny Vaughan's sidekick

2005 Host, E4 Music Zone

2005 Co-presenter, When Games Attack videogame show with Dominik Diamond and Jonny Ffinch

2004-2007 Co-presenter, European Poker Tour with Colin Murray

2002 Appeared on TV for the first time, playing Bubbles on Bo' Selecta! with Leigh Francis

1996-1999 Bodywork Dance Company, Cambridge 🚤

"When I lost The Xtra Factor, Laura Whitmore got in touch. She said, 'I loved you on that, you'll be a real loss.' There's a lot of support [from other women] for women in TV."

"I went to Tokyo for three weeks, and made some of my best memories doing this show. I was only 25. I was doing weird things like going to curry houses with robots – when would you do that, ever? I remember looking around thinking, 'Will this be my life or just a little stint?'"

"[While studying at Bodywork] I worked in every pizza restaurant going – Pizzaland, Pizza Hut, Pizza Express..."



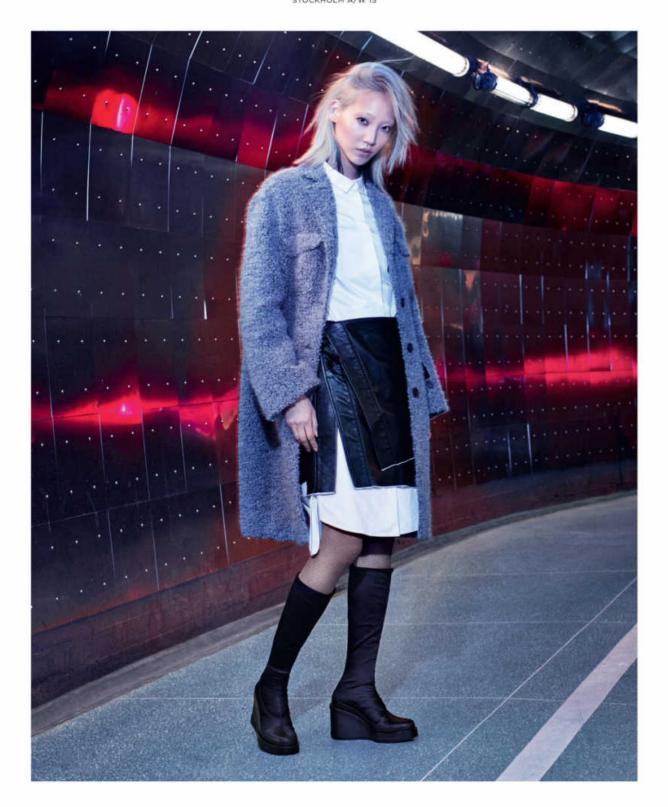
1991-1996 Wayland Community High School, Norfolk "I always had a job when I was younger, but we lived in the middle of nowhere, so I'd be picking daffodils or strawberries... [But] I knew I wanted this career from an early age, so I got involved with everything I could – like school pantomimes, drama classes, that kind of thing."

1984-1991 Great Hockham Primary School, Norfolk
"When I was younger, I always wanted to be a nurse.
My sister trained as one and she used to say to me that
the hardest bit about it was the emotional side. I would
have found that really difficult. Thank god I'm doing
[TV] now, because I couldn't do anything else!" ◆





MANGO

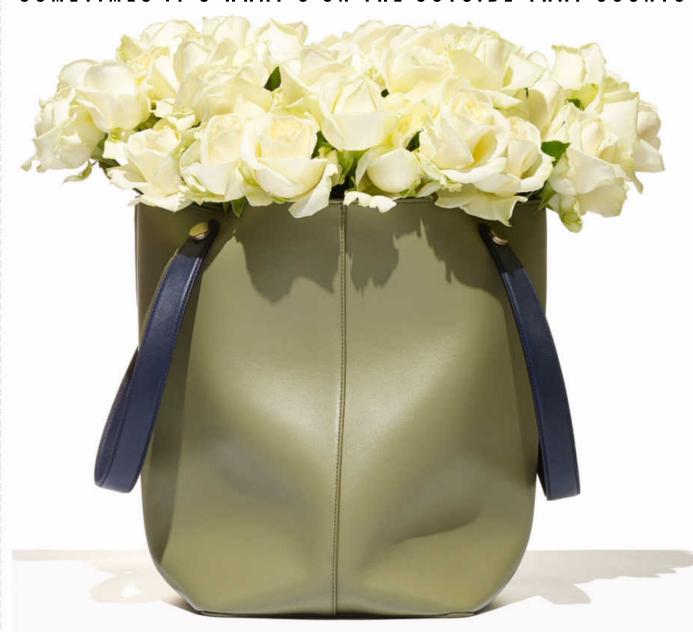


VAGABOND

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SOMETIMES IT'S WHAT'S ON THE OUTSIDE THAT COUNTS



YOU KNOW YOU WANT IT...

This season you'll be needing a bucket bag – a buttery-soft, leather bucket bag in a neutral shade that's way more interesting than black or navy. Kind of like this khaki Mulberry number. Pennies don't stretch that far? Remember the bucket-bag golden rule: allow at least a 4in gap between where the bag ends and your hips begin. Less than that and it'll appear as if the bag's wearing you – never a good look.

Bag, £945, Mulberry, Flowers, Flowerbx.com



Wear

HEY, HOW DO I WEAR...

the mid-season gilet?

As it makes its perennial return to our shoulders, this time around there are a few gilet rules to familiarise yourself with...

I IT'S NOT A BODY WARMER

It's not a vest either, or even (god forbid) a jerkin. All together now: it's a gilet – pronounced with that slightly pretentious French-inspired soft 'g' (zhee-lay). Got that? Good, now we can move on.

2 THIS IS A TRANS-SEASONAL ITEM

To be worn on those days when a coat is too much and a T-shirt too little. That means you need to layer. Follow this rule: make sure your lightest fabric is closest to your body and work outwards. Do it the other way around and you'll just add bulk.

3 IT'S ALL ABOUT THE NECKLINE

This is a good thing, as most women's slimmest point is around the collarbone. Short neck? Go for no collar or a shawl lapel (where the lapel is continuously curved, as on a tuxedo jacket). Long and swanlike? Go for a peaked lapel or be bold and pop it like Olivia Palermo does here.

4 THERE'S ONE FOR EVERY OCCASION

There are casual, softsilhouetted gilets and then there are work-appropriate gilets. Peaked shoulders and darts along the waist will whisper, 'Promote me.'

<mark>5</mark> THINK OF YOUR GILET LIKE A COAT

Buy one size up (you need to layer, after all) and never button it up (unless you want to look like you're going on a school trip).

Turn the page for more gilet styling tips

Wear









FASHION HOLLY COOPEY. PHOTOGRAPHS LEWIS HAYWARD, REX FEATURES, SPLASH, SPREAD PICTURES



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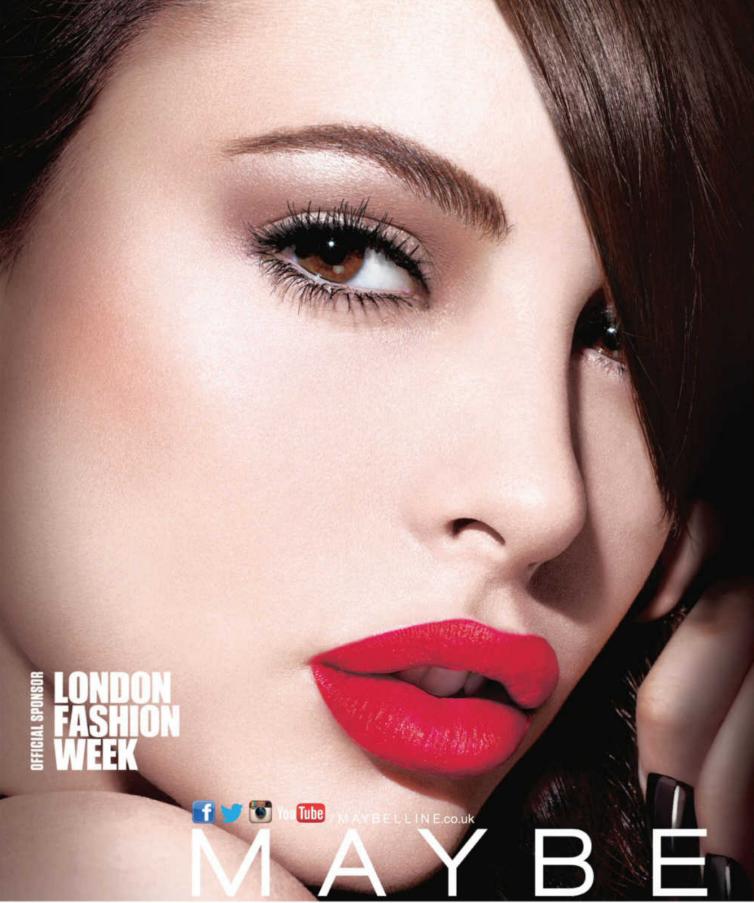












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BY SAVANNAH MILLER
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+
SKIRT £55

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WHAT I KNOW ABOUT STYLE...

There's a reason fashion blogger and face of Asos Curve GABI FRESH has almost a quarter of a million Instagram followers. Turns out she knows a thing (or even five) about surprising style. Take note...

Don't be limited by your dress size

Seriously, it's just a number. Five years ago I saw a dress I loved, but the shop only had it in a size 10. Rather than walk away, I tried it on and it fit (I'm normally an 18)! Had I stayed afraid, I would never have found that amazing dress.

2 Shop with neutral makeup

My signature beauty look is a bright matt lip in hot red or pink. But when I go shopping, I always make sure to apply more natural makeup so it doesn't distract from the clothes, and I don't end up buying things that will only look good when I'm fully made up.

3 Horizontal stripes? Yes. You. Can

I find horizontal stripes actually look best on curvy women, because they're in proportion with bigger figures. Look for stripes that are at least 2ins wide. (Those very thin, close-set stripes? Now they have an enlarging effect.)

4 You can definitely wear crop tops

Just add a high-waisted skirt or jeans so minimal skin is on show. Ditto, boyfriend jeans - don't shy away. They won't hide your curves (I promise) and they look fabulous with seguins and heels.

5 Be surprising with workwear

Experiment with the unexpected for stylish office outfits. If you're wearing, say, a structured blazer, try it with patterned trousers. Or team tailored trousers and heels with a colourful printed shirt.

THE VITALS

Age 27

Famous for... Her street-style blog, Gabifresh.com

See her in... The new Asos Curve autumn campaign





Amatch made in DEBENHAMS











Autumnal style wouldn't be complete without an outrageously impractical heel or androgynous flat



£25, Quiz









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Meet RUBY ROSE, the 29-year-old star of *Orange Is The New Black* and just about the only person we know incapable of taking a bad picture. Here's how she does it...

LEFT: JACKET, CEDRIC CHARLIER. BIKINI TOP, OHNE TITEL. RIGHT: JACKET; SHORTS, BOTH J CREW. TOP, 3:1 PHILLIP LIM. BRACELETS, LIZZIE MANDLER



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(How "Having short nails doesn't mean you can't make a statement," says nail technician Loui-Marie Ebanks. "In fact, dark shades look better on shorter talons, while adding a matt topcoat over a metallic varnish adds instant chic and cool. If you don't have a steady hand, try using a fine-bristled concealer brush; it'll help give a precise result." Gucci Nail in Conjugate Octaviore Conjugate Oc Clarins Joli Rouge Lipstick in Red Orange, £19.50 Estée Lauder **Pure Color Envy** Liquid Lip

Potion in Vague

Obsession, £20

Clinique Just

KM

KMS Hair

Play Gel

Wax, £15.50



BY INGEBORG VAN LOTRINGEN AND LUCY PARTINGTON. INTERVIEW DEANNA PAI. PHOTOGRAPHS TOM SCHIRMACHER. STILL LIFES HEARST STUDIOS. HAIR CHRIS MCMILLAN FOR LIVING PROOF/SOLOARITISTS.COM. MAKEUP DARLENEY. TSHIRT, DSOUAREDZ

Selected shades from Smashbox Shapematters Palette, £60 (available 16 September)

Phoebe, I knew. She's everything I'd want. She's this charitable, giving side. sourced fashion line called Scallywags together." ◆

Her secret skill

Her tattoo drama

revealed in an interview,

actress with an Archer

Her sexuality

been born a boy. I didn't

fluid. I later realised you

like a guy. I feel really

Her other half

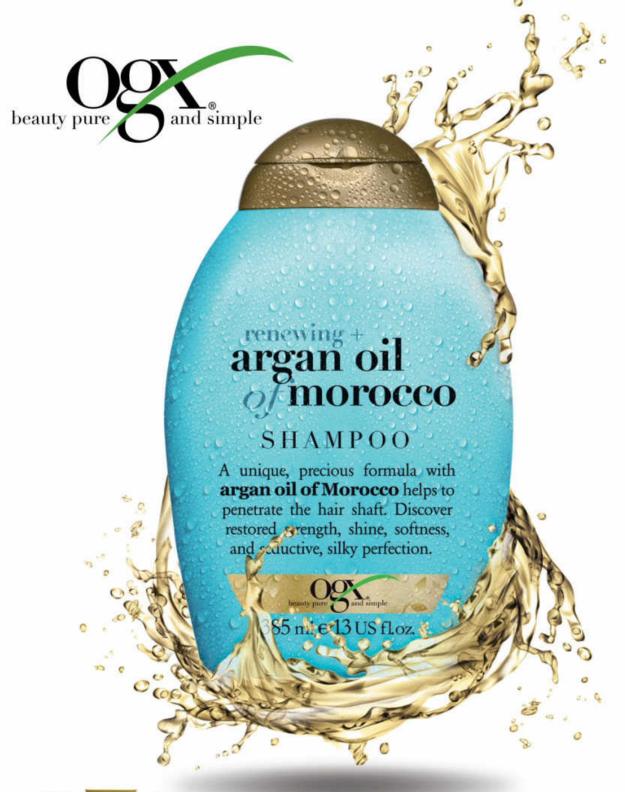
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0

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Tom Ford Noir EDP, £70 Noir may appear the feistiest fragrance of the bunch, but it's all a façade. It's ginger and vanilla will make you feel warm and ever so sexy. Jimmy Choo Illicit EDP, from £42 The invigorating mix of ginger and bitter orange will give you all the energy you need to get physical. Promise.

Prada Les
Infusions de Prada
Oeillet EDP, £84
Peppers, cloves and
er... carnations somehow
make a criminally
seductive scent.

Alaïa EDP, from £42 Pink pepper - the spicy note in this fragrance - is said to help treat colds and sniffles. Better than a Lemsip.

Jo Malone Mimosa & Cardamom Cologne, from £42 Important news alert: cardamom is an aphrodisiac. Spritz for your life!











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Miracle mascaras



They're smart, they're new and they're promising *you* big fat lashes. But do these power players live up to their hype? Acting Beauty Editor **CASSIE POWNEY** investigates



formula. Disclaimer: the job does take a while with a brush this little!



They both define decadence says MARC JACOBS, as does

Marc Jacobs Decadence EDP, from £49, has iris, saffron and plum.

CAVIAR and French fries.'

"VOLUPTUOUS. **FEMININE** WOMEN LIKE

SOPHIA LOREN AND AVA GARDNER."



"BEING NAUGHTY, but always with charm and a sense of humour."



GREEN NAIL POLISH."



"DISCO. It's the soundtrack to my teens, when I stayed up all night clubbing then went to school in the morning. Naughty and not legal!"



95







Fiat with

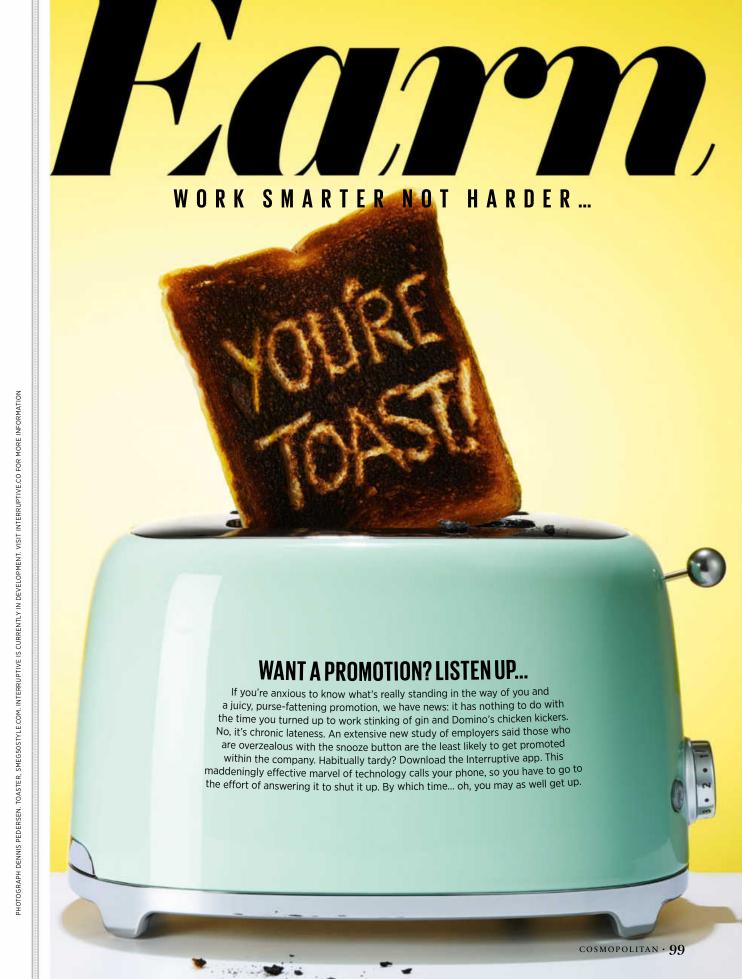
THE ICON RELOADED

Change the Fiat 500? That's crazy talk. So we set out to subtly style-up the little beauty. Take a look at the red hot halo-style rear lights with body coloured inserts. Just one of many ferociously fashionable touches that make the new Fiat 500 even glossier. Shine baby, shine.

GLOSS TECHNOLOGY



Fuel consumption figures for new Fiat 500 range in mpg (I/100km): Urban 51.4 (5.5) – 65.7 (4.3); Extra Urban 65.7 (4.3) – 83.1 (3.4); Combined 60.1 (4.7) – 74.3 (3.8). CO₂ emissions 110 – 88 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO₂ figures based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.



TOOMS TO THE STATE OF THE STATE

Being economical with the truth *can* be a good thing... as these high-flying blaggers found out



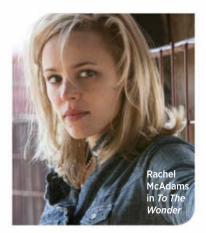
'I bluffed my way into film-making'

"I worked in marketing but my dream was to make a motor-sports film. I finally arranged a meeting with ITV's director of sport, Niall Sloane, who told me if I could complete my film by a certain date, he'd show it. I said I'd been sponsored by advertisers (I hadn't) and promised I'd deliver, but I had no idea whether I could pull it off. But, after a crash course in film-making and raising £406,000 by myself, my film Journey To Le Mans was aired by ITV last December. It's now been bought worldwide. Sometimes you have to throw yourself into situations you're not yet equipped for - then do everything in your power to make it happen."

CHARLOTTE FANTELLI, 31, CEO OF FANTELLI MEDIA

'My language "skills" landed me a job in travel'

"To make my CV stand out, I said I could speak four languages, including Northern Sotho (a South African region I'd lived in for a year). Of course, I didn't admit I could barely hold a basic conversation in it. Within a day, I was being interviewed at an online travel publication, where the panel said they'd called because they'd never heard of Northern Sotho, and wanted to know more. After reeling off the few sentences I knew, they offered me the position on the spot. It gave me the break I needed, and I'm now a successful PR manager. I don't condone lying, but that small fib set my CV apart." JANET NEWENHAM, 29, PR MANAGER



CELEBS LIE TOO...

'I hid my fear of horses to win my dream movie role'

"I was so excited to be working with the director Terrence Malick that when I was asked if I had a problem with horses, I said, "I love horses!" But really, I'm so terrified and allergic. On the first day of the shoot I was in a corral with 50 horses who'd never been touched by humans. I took a *lot* of antihistamines..."

RACHEL McADAMS ON FILMING *TO THE WONDER*

'I pretended to be an internet guru'

"Before the net really took off, the CEO of a well-known finance company asked if I could build him a website – I said yes, despite having no knowledge of the web. But I *did* know I'd find a way. I located a guy who said he'd create the site – and in the end I was paid almost £50,000. If I hadn't done it, the CEO probably would have thought, 'Who *will* lie to me and get the job done?' I did."

MARK STEVENS, CEO OF MSCO.COM; AUTHOR OF YOUR MARKETING SUCKS

'Know when to tell the truth'

When it comes to your CV, be careful what you 'elaborate', says Karren Brady CBE

As an employer, it's vitally important to have trust in your staff. Occasionally, little white lies can work, but if you get caught out there's the potential it could end your career. Telling a lie can also be detrimental physically, as you can end up stressed from fear of being exposed. A good business will work hard to create an honest culture among staff, and it's braver to tell the truth than pretend you have the answer, or certain skills if you simply haven't. It's also important you tell the truth in the right way - be tactful and, if possible, offer a solution for any shortcomings. Remember, there's a massive difference between social fibbing, such as telling a friend she looks great in a dress to avoid any upset, and lying professionally. With so many risks associated, the latter shouldn't even be an option.

FIESTA STYLISTA



#FIESTASTYLISTA

AW15/16 DÉCOR DRESSING



Stay on trend with the ever-fashionable FORD **FIESTA** and this season's opulent interior-design inspired outfits. Keep following **#FiestaStylista** to see which of our budding UK stylists will win their big break and become next season's Stylista. fiestastylista.co.uk



Go Further





YOURS? GONDOLA 0 OPI WEAR CANNOLI PROSECCO THE SPOT MARK'S STILL SHOPPING! . ST. THERE 1.100 BAROQUE, . . BUT GIMME

















The higher the risk, the greater the reward'

How does a young woman from Yorkshire with zero contacts go on to conquer Silicon Valley? RUZWANA BASHIR, 32, the co-founder of travel-concierge app and website Peek, explains...

Look for a gap in the market

That's where all the best ideas come from
– in fact Peek was born out of necessity. I'd just
spent 20 hours researching activities for a trip to Istanbul
and thought, 'There must be an easier way.' I wanted to
be the one to create that one-stop solution.

➤ When building a brand, make your values clear Peek had to feel fun and encourage exploration, so everything from the bright-yellow logo to the word 'peek' needed to instantly convey that. The core focus of building a brand is making sure people can engage on an emotional level too.

Hire people who have the skills you don't

After coming up with the idea for Peek, I knew I could do the business side, but not the technical side. So a friend introduced me to my now-partner, Oskar Bruening, a technology genius. I love thinking of creative ways to put fires out, and see problems as puzzles in need of a solution. Together, we're a strong partnership.

➤ You can't stop people judging you by your looks
As a woman who loves wearing colourful clothes and
heels, it often comes as a surprise to people that I have an
MBA [master of business administration] from Harvard.
If someone isn't getting a good sense of who I am, I'll say,
'I want to make it clear that what you're thinking isn't



necessarily the case.' If you're worried people have got you wrong, it's OK to pull them up on it.

Forget about what's not on your CV

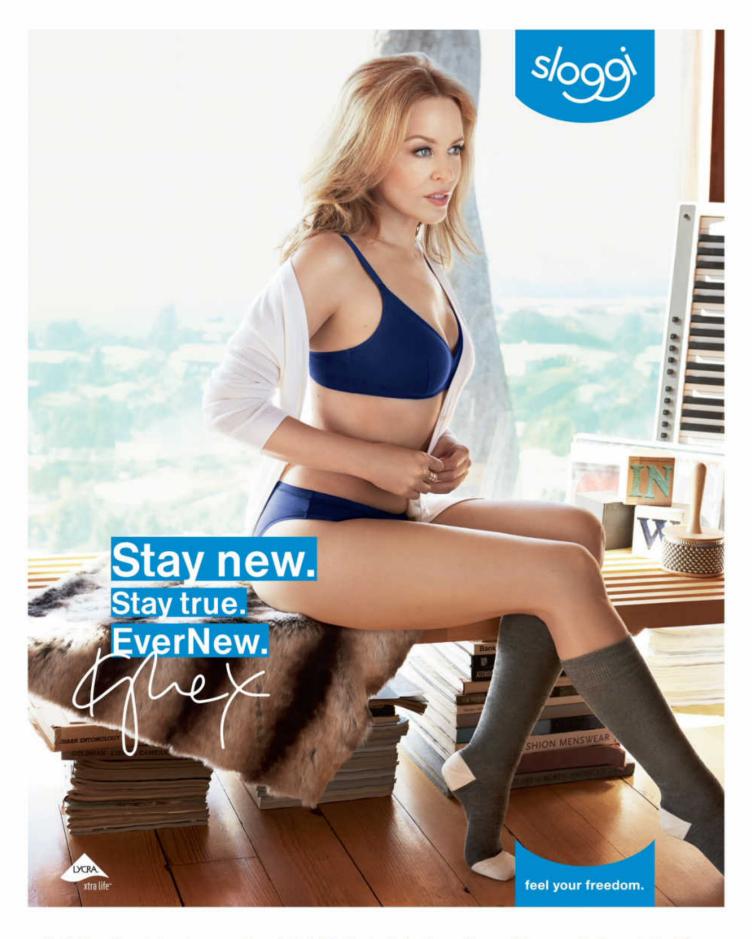
Women often feel they have to wait until their CV has the 'right' experience – but the higher the risk, the higher the reward. Even if you think you're underqualified, go for that job or promotion. You've nothing to lose and lots to gain.

I've left plenty of meetings thinking, 'I bombed that...'

RUZWANA'S CV

2011-present: Co-founder and CEO of Peek 2010-2011: Director at Art.sy 2010: The Gilt Groupe 2006-2009: Analyst at the Blackstone Group 2005: Internship, Goldman Sachs 2009-2011: MBA, Harvard Business School 2003-2006: BA, Oxford University

2001: Graduates from Skipton Girls' High School But I've learnt to understand some days will be draining – you've just got to pick yourself up and keep going. When we first began pitching to investors it would often feel as if they were engaging with our ideas, but getting them to write that first cheque was a different story. Staying calm is the hardest part of being an entrepreneur but the ability to roll with the punches is vital.





SHOULD YOU DETOX WITH CHARCOAL?

You'll soon be seeing charcoal in everything from bottled water and juices to supplements and beauty products - but is it worth the hype? The first thing to know: this is not the stuff you chuck on your BBQ; we're talking 'activated charcoal' which is safe to consume (unless you're on certain meds - check with your GP). Second: it's been touted as a miracle detox ingredient - toxins attach themselves to it as it passes through the body. While it won't neutralise a calorie blowout or nix a hangover, consuming it at the end of the day, when your body needs it most, can only be a good thing, so keep a bottle by your bed. Eau Good charcoal filter water bottle, £14.95, Abode



Now you can

have sensitive tooth care and whiter teeth.*



Sensodyne True White cares for sensitive teeth and is 10x less abrasive than many everyday whitening toothpastes.



HEMP MILK



PER 100ML

39 cals; 2.5g fat; 0.04g protein

WHAT? Ground hemp seeds in water. Smells suspicious. Tastes good.

PROS Full of magnesium, thus good for building and repairing muscle.

cons It's got omega-3 fats, but they don't act like those in oily fish, so there's no skin benefits.

USE Best in a postworkout smoothie.

TRY Good Hemp, £1.99, Holland & Barrett

SOYA MILK



PER 100ML

37 cals; 1.7g fat; 3.1g protein

WHAT? Think soya beans blended with water. Big in Starbucks.

PROS Almost as much calcium as cow's milk but lower in calories and fat.

cons Inconclusive studies link it to breast cancer and infertility.

USE In small amounts – a little in tea and coffee works just fine.

TRY Alpro Original Soya, £1.39, Asda

ALMOND MILK



PER 100ML

13 cals; 1.1g fat; 0.4g protein

WHAT? Your favourite nuts, whizzed up and strained, with H₂O.

PROS Lowest-calorie of all the milk alternatives and the most palatable.

CONS Low in protein, plus it sinks like a stone in tea and coffee.

USE In cereal. And it lends cake a nutty edge.

TRY Blue Diamond Almond Breeze, £1.50, Sainsbury's

RICE MILK



PER 100ML 47 cals; 1g fat; 0.1g protein

WHAT? Processed milled rice and water. Often comes flavoured.

PROS It's sweet and very low in fat, but not much else.

cons Its sweetness is from carbs converting to sugar. Not good.

USE Sparingly. Many flavoured rice milks are like drinking sugar.

TRY Rice Dream Organic Original, £1.38, Waitrose

COCONUT MILK



PER 100ML 25 cals; 1.8g fat; 0.2g protein

WHAT? Grated coconut flesh with the cream strained off, plus water.

PROS The high fatty-acid content is thought to keep skin taut. Bonus!

CONS High in saturated (read: bad) fat, and goes off quickly due to its high oil content.

USE In a smoothie or a splash in your curry.

TRY Blue Dragon Coconut Milk (400ml), £1.99, Tesco



PER 100ML 48 cal; 1.6g fat; 2g protein. **WHAT?** That's right, camel, and it's billing itself as the lighter alternative to moo juice. It's also said to be the most nutritionally similar to human breast milk. (Is that a selling point?) **WORTH A TRY?** Not really, unless you're diabetic – it's rich in insulin. Plus, it's around £3.50 per 500ml. **TRY** If you're still keen, visit Ukcamelmilk.co.uk.



STEP 3

MILLIE MACKINTOSH

from Lomax Training, 2015. MARK GARLICK, her personal trainer 25-minute plan that has one of the most transformations of talked-about body targets every inch gives you the

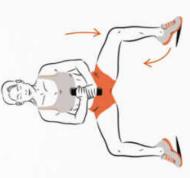
TARGETS Abs and arms

2 Holding 2-5kg weights, pull your 3 Hold for one minute, then repeat right elbow up, so your fist is level 1 Get back in that plank position. with your chest, elbow pointing upwards. Keep your hips steady.

4 Do four rounds with 30 seconds? rest between rounds. Disclaimer: you're gonna ache! on the left side.

1 Get in a fully extended plank position. 2 Now move your right foot up as close 3 Repeat on the other leg, and do 15 to your right hand as possible, keeping reps on each side. Sweating yet? your abs tight and hips steady.

STEP 2 Plié squat



TARGETS Hips and thighs

1 Holding one dumbbell, take a wide 2 Now rock forward onto your toes. stance with your toes pointing out. maintaining balance on your toes. 3 Squat down as low as you can,

with 30 seconds rest between sets. Engage your abs to keep yourself 4 Do four sets of 20 reps each, steady. Come on, get low. Rise back up to standing. Smile!

STEP 4 Curtsy lunge **TARGETS Glutes and thighs**

1 Grab your weights and unge backwards to the 2 Now bend your right left with your right leg. knee until it touches the floor, then return to standing.

sets. Trust us, it's worth it. 30 seconds' rest between reps on each leg, with 3 Do four sets of 20



STEP 5 Shuffle lunge

TARGETS All-over fat burning

foot is in front. Do this twice, then Now lightly jump your right foot forwards while jumping your left foot back, then swap so your left 1 Stand with both feet together. lunge forwards with your front

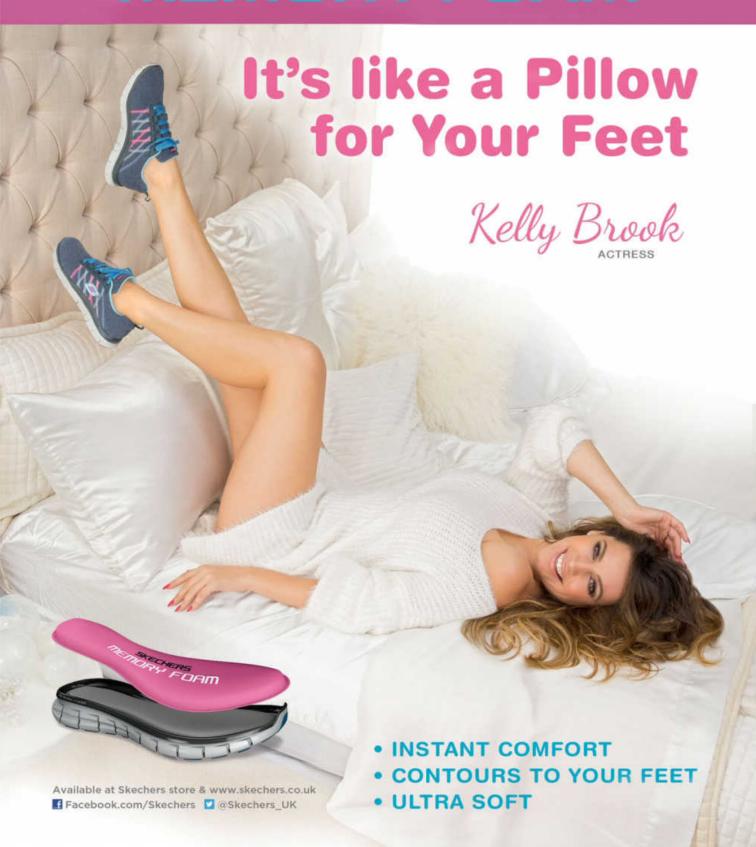
time lunging with the opposite foot. whole move, this foot. Repeat the This is one rep.

with 30 seconds' rest 2 Do 15 reps as fast 3 Aim for four sets between each set. as you can.

And that's it! •



SKECHERS MEMORY FOAM









CLEAN UP YOUR ACT

If you've been throwing your gym kit in with your regular wash, you've been doing it wrong. Sportswear needs special care - namely a mild detergent such as Woolite and a 40°C spin cycle. Anything stronger can damage sweat wicking and thermal technology.



Bra, £36, VS Sport

If you can fit more than one finger under the back band of your bra, it's too big

When it comes to your FIT KIT, there's no room for grey areas - keep it black and white



Vest, £19.50,



Watch, £89.95, Ice Watch at Watch Shop



Shorts, £19.50. Marks & Spencer



Trainers, £95, Asics at Size?



Leggings, £39, VS Sport



Earphones, £50, Urbanears



Rucksack, £34.99, MiPac at Asos

Every time we flit between Instagram, the latest cat meme and our mushrooming email accounts, our IQs take a battering. Feel like your mental faculties are slowly slipping away? Don't worry, there is hope, says Sophie McBain

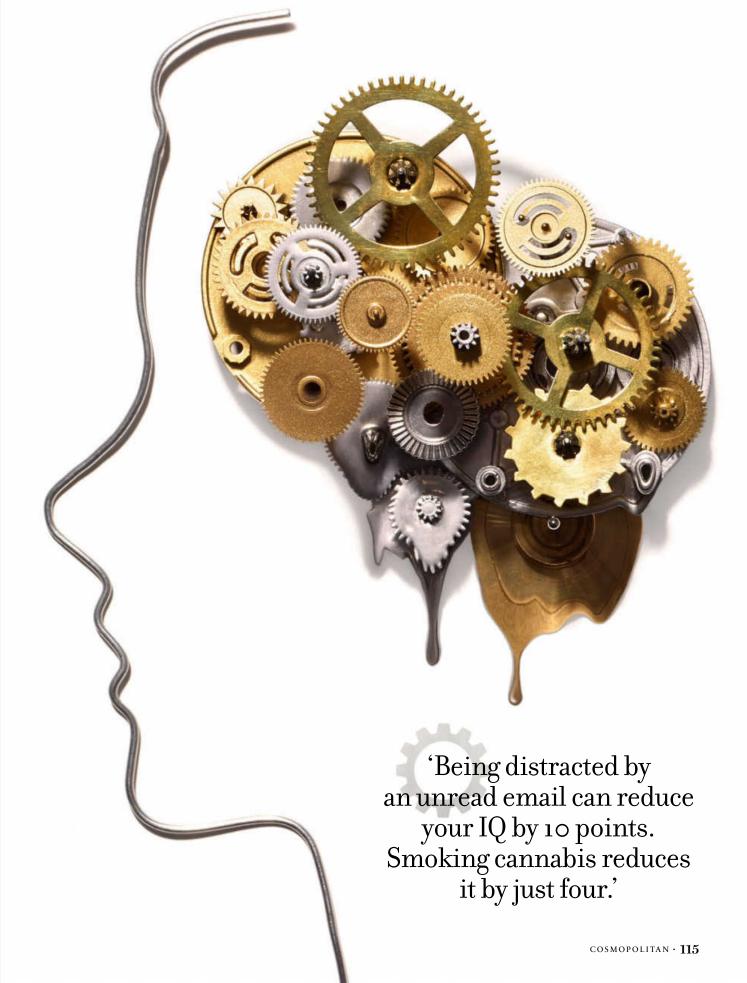


t wasn't until six months ago, when I left my magazine job to become a freelance writer, that I realised how

helpful it can be to work under the permanent threat of your boss seeing your computer screen. Now that my internet use is completely unmonitored, there are few limits on my ability to get sidetracked. One minute I'm composing a work email; the next I'm 100 photos deep into the Facebook wedding album of a person I haven't spoken to in 10 years.

I rarely have fewer than five tabs open on my browser. I check my phone, email and Twitter constantly for fear of missing something important. I rarely finish reading an article. I can spend several hours scrolling through news websites and recall enough information to fill a Post-it note. Most evenings, when I finally switch off my laptop, I feel guilty and anxious at having 'worked' so hard and achieved so little.

I know I'm not alone. We've become a nation of compulsive phone checkers and link clickers: the average 24-35-year-old whips out their smartphone 43 times a day. The attention span of a typical internet browser is just 15 seconds. "I hardly even read any more – I just waste"



Move

hours every evening on my iPad," a friend of mine complained when I told her about this piece. And this is a woman who, as a student, was renowned for achieving hours of Zen-like concentration in the library while most of us were still in bed.

I asked Professor David Meyer, a cognitive scientist at the University of Michigan, if he could explain some of the effects of my webbrowsing habits. "My immediate reaction is to say that your brain's getting fried, but that's not a scientific kind of answer," he says. His scientific response was more of a surprise: humans can't multitask. When we think we're doing two things at once - say, checking our email and watching TV - our brains are actually rapidly switching from one task to the other, and this mental effort is exhausting. The digital habits many of us have developed are dulling our brains. According to one study, being distracted by an unread email temporarily reduces your IQ by 10 points. Smoking cannabis only reduces it by four.

So why is it we just can't resist the lure of that unread email? "We become addicted to the constant stimulation, and it makes us want to seek ever-increasing levels of new things, and new information – to the detriment of our ability to concentrate," Daniel Levitin, author of *The Organised Mind*, told me. I was sceptical. Apart from a mildly concerning espresso habit, I pride myself on being addiction-free. But,

TRAIN YOUR BRAIN

Safeguard your IQ with these mind tricks

2 uzzle it

Puzzle it ou

Studies show a few minutes a day on a crossword can improve your memory. Do it at the end of your work day.

3

Dodge the lure of Pinterest

by downloading an app such

as Freeserve or SelfControl,

which temporarily disable your internet access.

This is a good

thing.

Think on your feet

A 40-minute walk three times a week was shown to improve memory and boost IQ levels. Even if it's just to Topshop.

Speak out

You're 50% more likely to remember a fact if you say it out loud as you read it. (Maybe one for your sofa rather than the bus.)

sure you've had the
experience of working
on your computer and
when things get a little
complicated and you're not sure
at to do next, you think, 'I'll take

he continued, "I'm

what to do next, you think, 'I'll take a break and check Facebook,' and the next thing you know two hours have gone by?" Busted.

It might feel good at times, but the mental effort needed to toggle between a dozen internet tabs causes your body to release the stress hormone cortisol. If you were a cavewoman confronting an angry woolly mammoth, this cortisol would be very useful as it stimulates your body's fight-or-flight response. But a permanently pinging inbox isn't the kind of enemy you can fight or flee from, and so cortisol levels can build up, producing a range of nasty side effects. It can make you irritable or aggressive, impair your memory, suppress your immune system and might even cause you to

gain weight. And if
that's not enough,
it also reduces
your libido,
which is another
reason not to
check your
work emails
in bed.
Still, even

knowing all this,
I can't exactly give
up the internet. Not
only has Google largely
replaced my working memory,
but I need to be easily
contactable – few editors
would agree to communicate
by letter or carrier pigeon.
Perhaps I need a tech fix
for my tech problem. Fred
Stutzman certainly thinks so.

while writing his PhD inspired him to develop an app called Freedom, which allows you to temporarily disable the internet while you are working. "Trying to get work done on a computer is like trying to do your homework while watching TV," says Fred. Now his company, and others, want to find new ways to make technology less distracting.

His struggles to concentrate

Meanwhile, I'm developing a few low-tech hacks for my bad digital habits. When I'm writing, I sometimes set 45-minute timers during which I'm allowed to do nothing but type or think (the good thing about working from home is no one can witness my eccentricities). I now aim to take regular breaks when I'll go for a walk, do some exercise or speak to someone off-screen. And when all else fails, I at least try to imagine the embarrassment of being caught Googling 'cats in costume' at 3pm on a Monday...

NEW Carex SHOWER RANGE

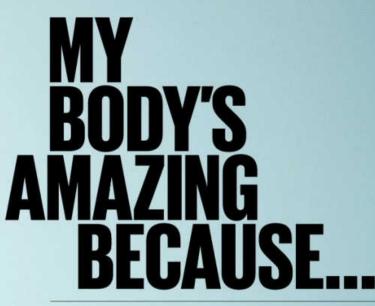






Developed to be more gentle & mild on the skin than ordinary shower gels.

Because life gets everywhere



... I chose to have my breasts removed, says **CLAIRA HERMET**, 28, a BBC Radio 1Xtra and BT Sport presenter from Essex

started comfort eating when I lost my mother to breast cancer at just nine years old. Four years later I weighed 13st and was bullied mercilessly at school. Before long I'd developed bulimia. I wanted what I thought was the 'perfect' body: a skinny size eight. I did get down to that size – but I quickly realised it wasn't real, maintainable or healthy, and over the next nine years I yo-yoed between that and a size 16. I wished my body was different. I'd look in the mirror, ashamed that it wasn't good enough.

In January 2012, I lost my 31-year-old sister to breast cancer too. Because of my family history, I was tested for the BRCA1 gene, which can increase your chances of cancer. When I was told I carried the gene, I felt like I'd been kicked in the stomach.

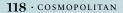
Last summer, I decided to have a preventive double mastectomy. It wasn't an easy decision, but I felt lucky that I could actively do something to avoid the same fate as my mum and sister. Still, I questioned what I'd look like – would I hate my body? Then I realised appearance didn't matter; I was alive. When someone close to you has died, you know how important that is – anything else is a bonus.

In January this year I had my breasts removed and implants put in. By then, my attitude towards myself had changed. I started working *with* my body, rather than fighting against it.

I found an attainable gym routine and began cooking healthy, home-made food.

The happier I became, the more confident I was. People notice that far more than a bit of cellulite. Now I'm 11st 5lbs, and proud of every ounce. And I've realised I *always* had the perfect body.

* October is
National Breast
Cancer Awareness
Month. For more
information, go to
Coppafeel.org – and
find some feelgood inspiration
at Cosmopolitan.
co.uk/body



ENDS, NOT, MY PERIOD. New*Always Ultra. Up to 100% leak protection. Stay out till sunrise with new Always Ultra. Its super absorbent core has liquid locking gel, and gel can't leak. Remember, great stories don't happen when you stay in. Also available in Liners.

always







AMPAX (OMPAK PEARL ESS LEAKS

Outsmart Mother Nature



Our only compak that fits your shape
for our #1 in comfort and protection.**

NEW! TAMPAX
Compak PEARL





NATASHA DEVON WANTS A WORD...

What would make you happier right now?

1) A £1k pay rise... □ 2) Losing a stone... □

If you answered 2) you're not alone. But let me tell you something: believing that hitting a goal weight equates to being happy can leave you feeling anything but. Earlier this year one of my favourite writers, Bryony Gordon, was attacked by professional troll Katie Hopkins about her curvy figure. Bryony responded thus: 'Well done for attacking a former bulimic on her postbulimia body. I mean really: have a medal. And then get a life.'

As Twitter gave a collective cheer, Bryony declared, "After all those years of fearing fat, I now find it rather wonderful. Perhaps I have a sort of reverse body dysmorphia going on. Maybe I'm simply high on sugar. But since I've allowed myself to become overweight I've never, ever been happier."

Bryony's words were controversial, as most of us have trouble equating fatness and happiness. Studies reveal we take on a 'thin ideal' at a young age, striving towards it for most of our lives. And more than a third of us say we *would* rather lose a stone than have a £1,000 salary increase – showing just how much we value the idea of losing weight.

Yet as society's beauty standards become harder to achieve, obesity levels are rising steadily throughout the UK. The question is: would we in fact be happier, and indeed healthier, if we stopped striving for thinness?

When I asked my friend Kate, she had good reason to believe so. "Since I've knocked 'being thin' off the top spot of my wish list, I feel like I have my mind back," she said. "When I was obsessively calorie counting, on a crash diet or punishing myself in the gym, I didn't have time to focus on my problems or feel the feelings of low self-esteem and abandonment I'd had since childhood."

Mental-health practitioner Emma O'Brien believes it's common – particularly for women experiencing emotional distress – to deflect difficult feelings by focusing on losing weight, as Kate did. "Most of the women I've seen in my work will report some level of body dissatisfaction," she says. "With depression, for example, there is usually some reference to restriction of food or bingeing, even among women not diagnosed with eating disorders."

Emma also has a theory that women with mental-health issues will often use weight loss as a 'visual signifier' of an illness that can't be seen. Being thin becomes a way of saying to the world, 'Look! I'm in distress!' But, of course, you don't have to be clinically underweight to feel this kind of distress – which means women who *look* healthy

could be suffering in the same way.

'Would we be happier and healthier if we stopped striving for thinness?'

I asked a random selection of women aged 20-35 to recall times when they'd lost weight, and what had caused it. Many told me their weight naturally dips in the summer months or they lost their appetite during the first throes of romance. Conversely, other women reported losing weight because they were in abusive partnerships, bereaved, going through a break-up or stressed. It's clear, then, that weight loss is just as

often an indicator of distress as it is of success or happiness.

And it's also the case that even if you lose weight healthily and reach your 'perfect' dress size, it's unlikely to affect your long-term happiness. There's a psychological theory, known as hedonic adaptation, that says even if you go through a majorly positive or negative life event, your base level of happiness returns to normal after a short period of time.

Perhaps, like Kate, we should stop believing that a particular aesthetic ideal will bring us happiness. We should focus on living a healthy lifestyle and striving towards a happy mindset – *then* see how our bodies want to be.



Could you be an









Instapreneur?

Tess Holliday @tessholliday 942,000 followers

Right now, there are thousands of women like you making their names – and their fortunes –

through INSTAGRAM. Want in on the action?

Want in on the action Of course you do...





oul-destroying. That was how Laura Jenkinson described her job as a customer-service officer at a local bank. Day after day behind the same glass screen counter, taking the same 10-minute walk from home to the small highstreet branch where she worked, the lack of any sort of brighter, bigger career on the horizon... it was hard. The plan was to stay there a year, tops. But a year bled into two and two merged into three.

Until one evening in 2011. Laura came home, realised the lease on her flat was about to come up and wondered whether it was time to go somewhere – or do something – different. That night, she went online and started searching for makeup-artist courses, a career she'd wanted to pursue since school. She

found one: a nine-month, £10,000 course that she could just about finance with an adult-learning loan from a bank. 'I *cannot* fail...' she would tell herself each night. 'I cannot fail.'

The beauty world, however, is notoriously hard to break into – the hours are punishing, the jobs are sporadic and sometimes unpaid, and networking is as key a skill as talent. Financial stability, she soon realised, did not look like one of the perks.

But by May 2012, around the time Laura's course was ending, she heard of a photo-sharing app called Instagram. Friends were using it to post pictures of food and life. It looked like a fun distraction, so she opened an account – @laurajenkinson – and did the same, uploading photos of bridal makeup and hairstyles she'd done while working that year's wedding season.

Power of regram

She worked out that she could also start seeing the work and lives of well-known makeup artists she admired, simply by following them. That's when she noticed that, unlike her, they were using the social platform to market their work.

Whether it was more traditional makeup or illusional looks, she also noticed they each had a specific style – a *niche*.

Laura did have a specialty, something she did for fun: creating lip art of cartoon characters



Laura's posts







drawn delicately in makeup from her nose to her chin. The first she posted was a Minion, from Pixar's Despicable Me. It got 20 likes. The second, of a frog, got more. Her work caught the eye of well-known makeup artists who would 'regram' it (recap time: that's when someone

reposts someone else's photo, tagging them in it). Regramming is the ultimate endorsement: to be regrammed by influential peers is the social equivalent of a written reference.

Within a year, Laura's following had grown from 90 to 4,000. Today, she has almost 300,000 followers and is a hugely popular makeup artist in the UK, charging as much as £2,500 for a few hours' work. She's also teamed up with iconic brands, and next year has a

book and her own line of makeup brushes coming out. Laura is 26 years old, and has been on Instagram for just three years.

New opportunities

Laura is one of many ambitious young women who are securing their futures – and creating their own powerful brands through social media. They are bright young things who, 10 years ago, would have needed an expensive marketing budget and PR team to get their work in front of an audience. Now. the democratisation of talent that social media has created means careers and job opportunities that just didn't exist a decade ago are springing up across every social-media platform - full-time blogger, digital influencer and professional Instagrammer (these are not jobs your school careers adviser would have suggested you study for).

At just 24, Australian personal trainer Kayla Itsines has 3.4 million Instagram followers and a mini fitness empire. Prior to Instagram she was a jobbing PT. It was only when she started showing her clients' before-and-after results on the platform that things began to change. She now sells 12-week exercise plans, has finished a world fitness tour and is about to launch her own range of fitness products. Meanwhile, 25-year-old Madeleine Shaw, a British nutritional health coach and blogger, has leveraged the power of her 164,000

fans to have one of the bestselling books of the past nine months in the UK.

Liz Eswein's account @newyorkcity is followed by 1.2 million. Incredibly, she can charge 64p per 'like' for a sponsored post (when an Instagrammer is paid to include a brand's product on their own feed) – and some get more than 20,000 double taps. That's an awful lot of money – and she's just 25.

Women making fortunes also include Tess Holliday, the 30-year-old plus-size model, who became the first of her height and size to be signed to a major modelling agency because of her Instagram presence.

Sisters Danielle and Jodie, of luxury accessories brand @dannijo, use pictures on Instagram to sell their products, while @yoga_girl Rachel Brathen's 1.5 million dedicated followers have allowed her a lucrative publishing deal. Fashion blogger Eugénie Grey (@feralcreature) has 384,000 followers and it's

#love

was the most popular hashtag of 2014

Wednesday is the best day for likes and comments

thought 46% of her income comes from sponsorships through Instagram.
Camille Charrière's legions of followers for @camtyox have earned her associations with the likes of Calvin Klein. Then there's Chiara Ferragni, AKA The Blonde Salad, the world's most popular fashion blogger; Danielle Bernstein of @weworewhat – about every two of whose nine daily posts are paid

for – and Hilary Rushford, a personal stylist who says she makes a significant amount of her six-figure income from Instagram.

Since the photo-sharing service launched five years ago, many have realised its potential to create money, not for itself (Instagram is rare in that it has only just started to sell ads), but its users. Despite being four years younger than Twitter, it has almost as many active users (around 300 million), plus the average person spends 3.7 hours on Instagram every month that's more than they spend on Twitter or Pinterest. And that's why, when it comes to cold hard cash, a growing Instagram account is what you really want. Companies see the platform as having one of the most engaged audiences, plus 68% of >







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that audience is female and 90% under the age of 35.

As for those looking to launch themselves on the site, the benefits are limitless: there are no overheads, your posts have a potential instant 'reach' (advertising slang for audience) of 300 million, and it can be used anywhere – your kitchen, bedroom, the gym, or even from the other side of the world.

Be authentic

But how does one person's account become a commercial success where hundreds of thousands of others barely get noticed? Laura believes it's all down to authenticity and specificity. After all, Laura's Instagram account started life as so many do - with a simple snap of a generic bunch of flowers. It was only when she decided to hone it, deleting anything that wasn't makeup related, that it became an attractive portfolio of what she's capable of. "I wanted to have a similar theme with my pictures," she says. "Rather than random photos with random filters." Her account also became the go-to place for this style of lip art, and the reason people follow her.

Knowing that, Laura made sure her followers got what they wanted, and often. She took photos of 10 different looks and uploaded them to Instagram during the week.

"I set a target to do one lip-art post a week," she says. "And anything



makeup-related once a day or once every other day." Very slowly her followers started to ratchet up.

Then something happened. In August last year, a Chinese website ran a story about her work. Within a few days, popular sites such as Buzzfeed, the Mail Online and online bulletin board Reddit ran

Ludwig,
Crema, Amaro,
Valencia,
X-Pro II –
the most
popular filters
in the UK

her story too, boosting her followers to 70,000.

But the biggie was when Instagram themselves contacted her in November. "Part of me thought it was a prank," she says. Her story appeared on Instagram's blog, and a picture of one of her creations - Timon from The Lion King - was posted on their Instagram account, which has 88.4 million followers. "It went crazy," Laura says. "My following doubled in half an hour. I had strangers commenting on my pictures saying, 'Your life is going to change.'

This year, she worked on campaigns with Snog

Frozen Yogurt and film company eOne, as well as doing sponsored posts for luxury lifestyle brand Aspinal of London, Fruiteatox (a detox drink), and Daniel Wellington watches. Brands pay her anything from £200 to £1,000 for a sponsored post, and up to £2,500 per picture for campaign work - more than the average monthly wage of a customer-service officer at a bank. The work is lucrative and also, she says, booming.

Hilary Rushford

@hilaryrushford

54,000 followers

Advertisers' dream

"Ultimately, brands want reach," says Toby Chiswick, a social-media board director at JWT, where he works with brands to create content and manage their social-media communities. "If you've got an Instagram feed with a super-engaged audience of a certain demographic – say, women aged 20 and over – that's what the advertisers want."

Advertising this way is much less obvious – or, in corporate speak, more >

'native'. Instagram offers a down-to-earth alternative.

"Everybody knows advertising is biased," says internet psychologist Graham Jones, who works with businesses to help them understand and use social media. "But when Instagrammers and bloggers endorse a product, they're doing it for themselves, and that authenticity carries through. People see it as much more real, and they want to associate with that authentic person who's saying, 'I like this product."

Going social

"You tap through to find someone's profile," says Simon Cheadle, a creative at London digital agency Work Club, which generates content for brands' social-media accounts. "Ten minutes later you're down a rabbit hole, looking at some Brazilian girl's flip-flop collection." This is



why an account's followers can explode when someone popular or influential tags another account in one of their own posts, as was the case for Laura.

It's also a very positive, aesthetically pleasing place to hang around. Buttons only allow you to 'like' a post. Anything negative must come in the form of a comment, which takes effort, and involves putting your name next to it; and the only way to block content is to 'unfollow' an account entirely.

And, unlike Twitter and Facebook, Instagram is where you go for 'down time.' "People go on Instagram to get away from it all," suggests Simon. "You can look on Instagram and don't really have to think."

There's an added bonus to this, Graham explains: "When we're relaxed, part of our brain called the 'executive function' has more space, which means we pay more attention to what we're seeing and act on it in a different way." The appeal to companies wanting to advertise their products is obvious.

"I have been incredibly lucky," says Laura. "But I've worked my arse off."
Looking back, she didn't expect to achieve what she has – and, of the 16 people she went to college with, only two or three are still makeup artists now. "If this social media stuff hadn't kicked off, I don't know if I'd be doing what I do now," she says gratefully. It really does pay to put your money where your mouth is.

How to grow your Insta-fame



"Be consistent. I rarely post more than once a day."

JEN SELTER (fitness model) @jenselter, 6.8m followers

"Choose a universal topic to post about — something people can relate to, such as food in my case. It makes it easier to connect, because they see something familiar, even though it's presented in an unfamiliar way."



IDA SKIVENES (food art) @idafrosk, 283,000 followers



"Be authentic. People appreciate that. Let your voice come through — even if you piss people off."

TESS HOLLIDAY (plus-size model) @tessholliday, 942,000 followers

"Network. Reply to your followers' comments it humanises your account."

LAUREN BATH (travel photography)
@laurenepbath,
420,000 followers ◆



Time to chill

Embrace autumn and banish those pesky post-summer blues with these tips from beauty blogger Tar Mar

Summer is over and we can't wait to curl up on the sofa. But before you overindulge in comfort foods and let your skincare routine slide, beauty blogger Tar Mar shares her tips for staying on track all year round. Changes to your diet can cause havoc with your skin, as Tar Mar explains: "If I eat too much rubbish my skin will most certainly tell me in the form of a big red spot." To combat this she recommends picking healthy options. "There's tons of amazing alternatives to replace those carbs we all love. My favourite is sweet potato pizza or courgetti." The sudden change to colder weather can also affect your skin. "I have dry skin, so drinking lots of water helps," Tar explains. "And Simple Kind To Skin Micellar Cleansing Wipes are great for an on-the-go hydration boost!"

IT TAKES SECONDS

After a summer of endless beauty pampering, Simple has the answer to leave your skin fresh and

instantly hydrated. Remove makeup quickly with Simple Kind To Skin Micellar Cleansing Water (RRP £3.99). This miracle worker unclogs pores and instantly hydrates. And when you're on the go, get all the same benefits with a pack of Simple Kind To Skin Micellar Cleansing Wipes (RRP £3.99). Try Simple Kind To Skin Replenishing Rich Moisturiser (RRP £3.99) with skin-loving nutrients and vitamin B5 to moisturise and smooth your skin.



Simple Si

MEET THE EXPERT

Dr Philippa Lowe, cosmetic dermatologist and Simple Kind Community expert, knows the secret to healthy skin. "You need to hydrate your skin from the inside *and* outside. Drinking more water isn't enough; dry skin needs moisturiser. For best results, cleanse and moisturise day and night."

How did you meet your #fabulous friends?

Finding your best friend can happen in all sorts of unexpected ways. Here's to the **#fabulousfriends** in your life, however you may have met...



'We're Instafriends'

Danie (left) and I met on Instagram three years ago, when I was searching the #honourmycurves hashtag. We both run plus-size fashion blogs, so I began commenting on her amazing outfits. After meeting at a blogging event a few months later, we realised we had loads in common and became instant best friends. When I got engaged last year, Danie was an obvious choice for a bridesmaid. I'm so happy a hashtag brought us together – she's the most #fabulousfriend.

CALLIE THORPE, 26, AND DANIELLE



'We're a trio of soul mates'



I accidentally-on-purpose bumped into Grace (middle) on the first day of my drama degree. She looked so cool, I thought she had to be famous. Then I met Heather (left) in a theatre class and we bonded over an hour learning to somersault. And after years of Harry Potter marathons, cocktails and midnight feasts, we're still a fab three. HANNAH COOPER, 28, A JOURNALIST FROM SOMERSET, HEATHER DREWETT, 27, A TEACHER FROM ROTHERHAM, AND GRACE FELTON, 26, AN ACTRESS FROM WORCESTERSHIRE

'We're doing long distance'

I met Harriet (right) on
a school trip to an
adventure camp, (where
I failed epically at giving
her a piggyback up a
muddy hill – I dropped her).
She's been my rock ever since. We survived
school, went to the same uni and, despite
my moving to New York, she's been there

LAURA TARBOX, 29, STRATEGIC
DIRECTOR, AND HARRIET THURLEY,
29, COSMOPOLITAN'S FEATURES
WRITER, BOTH FROM LONDON

for me through it all. She's one in a million.

'We've shared everything'

Not many people can say they met their best friend before they met their parents. But I've known Claire (left) since we spent nine months growing next to each other.

We're identical twins – and so similar, our friendship feels effortless. We love travelling the world together, knowing our biggest supporter is there to share it.

LAURA JOPSON.

28, A FUNDRAISER, AND CLAIRE JOPSON, 28, A MARKETING



Do you have a #fabulousfriend who deserves recognition?

Every year Cosmopolitan celebrates the incredible achievements and friendships of women across the UK in a glittering, star-filled ceremony – and we need your nominations.

Simply email your details, along with why a woman you know is so amazing, to Ultimatewomen@ hearst.co.uk



COMPILED BY JENIFER SAVIN. PHOTOGRAPHS HEATHER GILDROY, THE LICENSING PROJECT



LOVEIS

... falling for our favourite brands' take on the trends

FASHION Shelly Vella PHOTOGRAPHS Tom Corbett

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HAIR Jonothon Malone at Lovely Management, using Bumble And Bumble Frances Prescott at S Management, using Stila JessiAnn and Chico at Models1 ISTED BY F---Junior Fashion Editor Holly Coopey 144

Coat, £60; cardigan, £35; jumper (worn underneath), £28, all Evans. Ring, £160, Jennifer Zeuner The IRINARY REPORTS OF THE PROPERTY OF THE PRO Welcome to our ultimate autumn/winter guide to great curvy style - with a little help from our talented team of contributors...

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

EVANS.CO.UK

Our contributors share their style inspo, fashion faves and what they've learnt working on The Curve Edit

BEATRICE BURNS 20. STUDENT

Fashion fanatic Beatrice assisted Cosmopolitan's stylist and helped her create our fab autumn/winter looks

WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF WORKING ON THE CURVE EDIT?

For me, the best part of working on this feature was seeing these amazing girls, who aren't professional models, proudly standing in front of the camera. Seeing them embrace their bodies and radiating confidence, truly feeling and looking beautiful, was really inspiring to witness, and to be a part of.

WHO OR WHAT IS YOUR STYLE INSPIRATION?

I've always loved Sophia Loren and the way in which she projects femininity. But for myself, I've never followed any particular style. I don't believe in trends; I just wear what I'm attracted to.

DESCRIBE YOUR STYLE IN THREE WORDS Chameleon – always adapting.



WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE ITEM IN YOUR WARDROBE?

That's so hard! But probably my green suede trousers. Even though they're the devil to coordinate with anything, I love them!

WHAT STYLE ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF?

It's more advice to all girls than just me: embrace being adventurous, have fun and don't care about what other people think.



JODE BROOKS 25, FASHION STYLIST Stylist Jodie came up with the concept for

our Pure Shores fashion story

WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF WORKING ON THE CURVE EDIT?

My favourite part would have to be seeing all my ideas come to life and getting to work with such an amazing team.

WHO OR WHAT IS YOUR STYLE INSPIRATION?

Model and photographer Margaret Zhang is someone I look to for style inspiration; her blog Shine By Three is amazing.

DESCRIBE YOUR STYLE IN THREE WORDS Minimal, functional, relaxed.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE ITEM IN YOUR WARDROBE?

The denim shirt dress I'm wearing in this picture (left) would have to be my favourite item. It's really easy to move about it in, which is essential for my line of work. I also love statement rings to add a bit of attitude to a simple look.

WHAT STYLE ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF?

To wear what best suits my body type. Certain brands are off-limits because they just don't work with my shape.



24, COSMO READER Amelia is a makeup artist and models part-time, including for The Curve Edit

WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF WORKING ON THE CURVE EDIT?

Showcasing this season's trends. It's so nice to see curvy clothing moving with the times and become so much more stylish!

WHAT STYLE ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF?

Have confidence in yourself – it's the most stylish thing anyone can wear!

SOPHIE HARDY

24, COSMO READER
Sophie is a digital marketing manager as well as one of our Curve Edit models

WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF WORKING ON THE CURVE EDIT?

Helping to prove that style comes in all shapes and sizes. I also met really great people – thanks *Cosmopolitan*!

WHAT STYLE ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF?

Dress to flatter your figure, don't worry about the size tag. Also, it's either boobs or legs – never both!



Joseph Danielle

26, COSMO READER Sarah is a learning and development coordinator and one of our Curve Edit models

WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF WORKING ON THE CURVE EDIT?

Being able to experiment with my style and gaining a new appreciation for my body shape. I now have a thing for boots!

WHAT STYLE ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF?

Never be afraid to be different. Your style is your way of showing the world who you are.



NAOMI SHIMADA

Naomi is a plus-size model, TV host and lifestyle blogger, giving her style tips for A/W throughout *The Curve Edit*

WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF WORKING ON THE CURVE EDIT?

The highlight was definitely meeting all the other lovely girls on set!

WHAT STYLE ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF?

I would tell myself to dress less fearlessly, to not let my size limit what I wanted to wear and to just wear what made me feel happy.

Fashion finds

Date for your diary: For your chance to win your A/W15 fashion haul for free, join Evans in stores nationwide on 5, 12 or 19 September to pick up a lucky 'Spotlight On Style' scratch card.

You can also win your chance to shop like the celebrities! Evans is offering a VIP shopping experience with a £1,000 voucher for the lucky winner. To enter, simply visit Evans.co.uk/wincosmo and fill out your details. Good luck!

MYSTYLE

We how

We asked our contributors to show us how they work their style, their way

SOPHIE

"My style ID would be feminine and figure-flattering. For work it's usually a tailored blouse, high-waisted skirt and blazer with a pair of pumps. For evenings, I like to look effortless, yet stylish. Usually a flattering midi dress with a pair of wedge heels or pointed court shoes. I also love to wear patterns, embellishment and pastel colours."

Jumper £12.99, New Look. Top, model's own. Trousers, £20, Evans. Boots, £68, Office



NAOMI

"I'd say my personal style is usually super-vibrant, yet clean-cut. I love to play around with more masculine looks while adding girly touches. I've actually just started to wear more low-cut tops for the first time in my life, which adds a sexy twist to tomboy style."

AMELIA

"My current style mixes a little bohemian chic with sports luxe. I like to pair high street with



"I'd definitely say I'm a vibrant person; pop colours and prints are my forte! A typical example would be an A-line midi skirt and shirt for work, and skinny high-waisted jeans and a colourful top for casual wear. I am also a dress lover and always enjoy experimenting with different styles and textures."







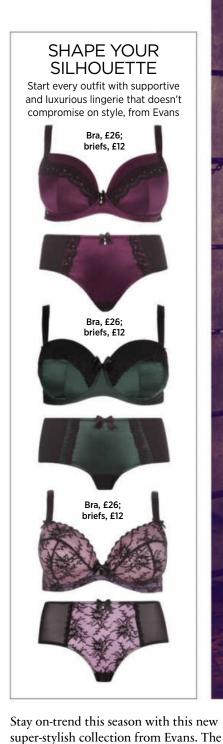












masculine look is huge for autumn, and

fashionable take on this key trend. With

mannish tailoring, '70s-inspired shapes

to suite everyone - no matter your shape

and tailored trousers with sporty trainers

or size. Team a pretty feminine blouse

for a fresh, young take on the tomboy

we can't get enough of Evans' fun and

and sports-luxe pieces, there is something whatever the occasion.

trend. There are also gorgeous subtle shimmers and metallic hints throughout the collection, perfect for taking you straight from the office to the bar. Be sure to play with textures and shapes, mixing heavy wools with softer silks and layering fluid styles with more structured, tailored pieces. This gorgeous monochrome collection is guaranteed to fit and flatter your curves and keep you body-confident



Always wanted to shop like a celebrity? Evans is offering a VIP personal-shopping experience for your chance to shop like the stars. Not only that, the prize also includes a £1.000 Evans voucher for the lucky winner. What better way to shop for your new A/W wardrobe? To enter, simply visit Evans.co.uk/wincosmo and fill out your details.





Your skin has its own unique concerns and

Your skin has its own unique concerns and neuroses but, asks INGEBORG VAN LOTRINGEN, is a bespoke face cream the smart woman's solution for better skin – or a waste of money?

PHOTOGRAPHS Elisabeth Hoff STYLING Ingeborg van Lotringen

s someone who's tried every face cream going, I can name precious few that deliver on their heady promise of skin transformation. But a new trend is afoot, with beauty companies ploughing their

money and expertise into 'custom' skincare – tailor-made formulas based on the condition and needs of your very skin cells. This is exciting because, in theory, it should ensure you home in on your skin's weaknesses and correct them, rather than relying on what is basically hope in a jar. To me, with more than 17 years' experience as a beauty journalist, this feels like a true step change in skincare. However, the question is, which option is best?



Ever had an eye test, where a machine takes pictures of your retina and blows air in your eye? Well, getting your skin analysed by an Ioma Sphere device is a bit similar, only the X-ray-like scans are of the deeper layers of your skin. What you get is an accurate measurement of your lines, hydration levels, bacterial activity and more, all scored on a 'perfect' to 'caution'

scale. The test is free, but you can opt to have Ma Crème blended for you on the spot. Based on the issues your test has thrown up, it incorporates all the ingredients your skin needs most.

Worth it? I believe in layering skincare for the best ingredient delivery. So packing everything into one formula feels questionable to me. Instead, I preferred using my test results to select some of Ioma's non-bespoke serums. That said, the actives in Ma Crème are very well-researched and dosed. And I love that you can get proof of your progress at any time with further scans. 'Your cream is blended for you on the spot, based on your test results'

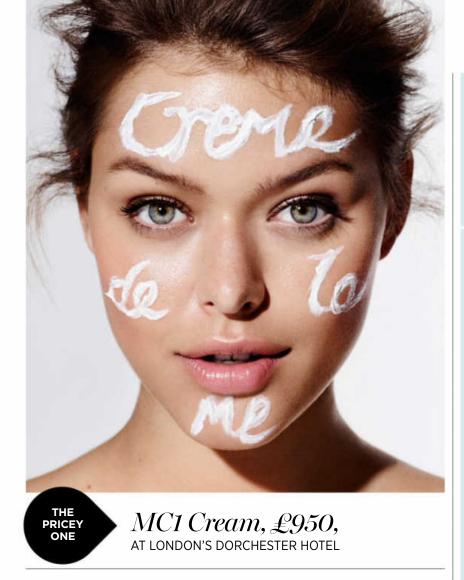


Clinical facialist (translation: someone with advanced medical training in skin health, so in other words, very different from your average facialist) Kate Kerr will assess your skin, history and lifestyle, then swipe your inner cheek with a cotton bud that goes off to a lab. A few weeks later, a report comes back detailing how you're set to age. Here's how it works: your DNA reveals your propensity for five main markers of ageing: collagen loss (sagging), sun damage (pigmentation), glycation (wrinkles), free-radical damage and inflammation (all signs of ageing). Horrendous? No because the results come with lists of the best actives to counteract your skin's weaknesses. Kate, with the help of a DNA analyst, writes a detailed and sensible prescription that involves skincare from many (very good) brands, supplements, dietary and lifestyle advice. My genes revealed (among other surprises) an awful glycation score that, Kate told me, can't be helped with skincare: I need to max out on cardio (turns out it burns skin-destroying excess blood sugar), eat a low-sugar diet and mainline green tea (another glycation buster) to wrestle those wrinkles.

Worth it? Absolutely. Yes, it's expensive, but this information is priceless and gives you a targeted way to fight ageing for life. There's also an easy option to order products but no obligation; you're free to source alternatives, armed with your list of actives. It's the most empowering 'beauty treatment' I've had yet.







Dr Barbara Sturm travels the world treating celebrities with her creams made from, wait for it... their own blood. "Inflammation is the main cause of ageing, and nothing fights it better than your own white blood cells," says Dr Sturm, who, at 43, could easily be mistaken for a woman in her early thirties. Her patented process multiplies the healing and cellregenerating compounds in your blood and incorporates it into a cream (or reinjects it into the face, depending

on your squeamishness level) to tighten pores, soften lines and zap inflammation. "It's the most targeted and best-tolerated way of improving skin," she says.

Worth it? Kind of... but I was sceptical. Yet Dr Sturm, who specialises in molecular orthopaedics and dermatology, knows her stuff, and based on the scientific process behind the cream as well as insider testimonials, this treatment really will soothe and regenerate skin. Users say eczema has disappeared and skin looks much plumper. However, even Dr Sturm admits it's only for the truly loaded (she recommends purslane, a plant extract, as a more affordable anti-inflammatory ingredient). What's more, the blood cultures survive just two weeks in the cream, so injections may be the better option.

PIMP YOUR POTION

Prefer to brew your own bespoke skincare? Go ahead: beauty brands are scrambling to join the made-to-measure revolution

SKIN BOOSTERS

Your skin's needs change with the seasons, so, for example, sensitivity, congestion and dehydration are often temporary. Therefore including them in daily skincare doesn't really make sense Instead, try Hylamide Boosters. from £13, water-like serums that you layer under creams or on top of each other to brighten, calm, quench and more - as and when they're needed.

TURBO SERUMS

Cover FX Custom Infusion Drops, £40, are oil-based serums you don't layer but mix – with any serum, cream or oil you like. Basically concentrated blends of essential oils and vitamins, they can turn even your foundation into a calming, hydrating, brightening or agebusting treatment.

BESPOKE BUFFERS

Retinol is famous for making spots and wrinkles vanish – and for irritating skin. So Dermalogica Overnight Retinol Repair, £73, comes with a buffer cream to control the (potent!) 0.5% concentration of retinol as needed. As your skin adjusts to the treatment, you dial down the amount of buffer cream to amp up the potency – clever.



Daily facial massage has two purposes – one: to help creams penetrate your skin; two: to speed up microcirculation, helping carry oxygen to your cells. Try a sci-fi massage tool or massage in cleanser or face oil in firm, circular motions, moving outwards and upwards from the centre of the face.





Supercharge Skincare

Give your skin the at-home bespoke treatment, with the tricks skincare pros swear by

Acids

Alpha-hydroxy acids dissolve dead skin cells that invisibly block pores and stop active ingredients penetrating. Treat yourself to a weekly AHA mask, or use an AHA-based cleanser daily.

Cleansing Brush, £79

Pixi Glow Mud Cleanser, £18



Softeners

Softening lotions are big in Asia. A liquid with gentle actives, splash it on before serum and it will help draw ingredients deeper into skin. FYI: it's so effective, avoid following it with retinol as you'll risk irritation, even if you're not sensitive.



Layering

Applying skincare in the wrong order can disrupt its effects. Apply in order of thickness, following a toning or softening lotion with serum. Now eye cream. Use face oil? Apply it next, followed by moisturiser. If you use a separate sunscreen, it goes on last.



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Palmer's Coconut Oil Formula drenches your skin with antioxidant-rich moisture that lasts 24 hours. Formulated with ethically and sustainably sourced raw Coconut Oil and Tiaré petal-infused Tahitian Monoi, all of the products are free from harsh chemicals, dyes, parabens, phthalates, mineral oil or gluten. The result is naturally radiant skin with a decadently, rich coconut scent.

> Parabens, Phthalates. Gluten, Mineral Oil or Dyes



The hair YOUWANT

Last month, we took three different women and asked them for their number-one hair concern. Now, with the help of the Specialist range from Tresemmé, do they finally have the hair they always wanted? Read on to find out...



Hanako has long, fine hair that she washes and styles every other day. As an actress, it's important her hair looks its best at all times, but its lack of shine was causing her stress. To combat this, Hanako has been using the Tresemmé Oleo Radiance collection, which has given her hair the beautiful shine it was lacking. She didn't want to use an oil that would leave her hair feeling greasy and weighed down; but thankfully the Oil Elixir (£8.99*) delivered shine while being lightweight. "My hair is a lot easier and quicker to brush through since using Oleo Radiance and especially the Oil Elixir. Also, my friends keep telling me that my hair looks a lot shinier than before."

"My hair is a lot easier and quicker to brush through since using Oleo Radiance and especially the Oil Elixir"



The Oleo Radiance collection illuminates dull hair. The Oil Elixir is particularly great as it is rapidly absorbed and non-greasy, meaning it won't weigh down your hair. Plus the blend of oils, with argan and almond oil, will leave your hair softer and shinier than ever.







UP TO 7 DAYS OF SMOOTH HAIR

Tresemmé 7 Day Smooth is infused with keratin and provides up to seven days of smoother hair.

The shampoo and conditioner (£5.99 each) are gentle enough for everyday use and the Heat Activated Treatment (£6.99) works with the heat of your straighteners, transforming hair from frizzy to smooth. Even better, your hair will stay smoother for up to four washes!**

"My hair is so much smoother and has less tendency to frizz, even when not straightening" Portia is a makeup artist with bouncy afro ringlet curls that tend to frizz. Her hair routine consists of a weekly treatment, with a few washes per week. Portia is very experimental when it comes to styling and colouring her hair. She loves her '90s curls, but also loves to rock a sleek, smooth look, however all that styling and colouring has caused her hair to split and frizz.

Portia tried out the Tresemmé 7 Day Smooth collection and noticed an immediate difference in the texture of her hair. "My hair is so much smoother and has less tendency to frizz, even on the days I don't straighten it. The range was really straightforward to use, plus it smelt really good. I definitely would recommend the 7 Day Smooth range to my friends – my hair felt a lot smoother for at least a week."

"After using

INJECT LIFE BACK INTO YOUR HAIR

To help combat hair that's dry, dull and lacking body, try the Youth Boost range from Tresemmé. It includes a shampoo (£5.99) to gently cleanse while creating visible fullness, a conditioner (£5.99) to restore softness, and the genius Fullness Emulsion Spray (£6.99), which lifts hair from the roots, giving instant body and youthfulness.

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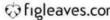




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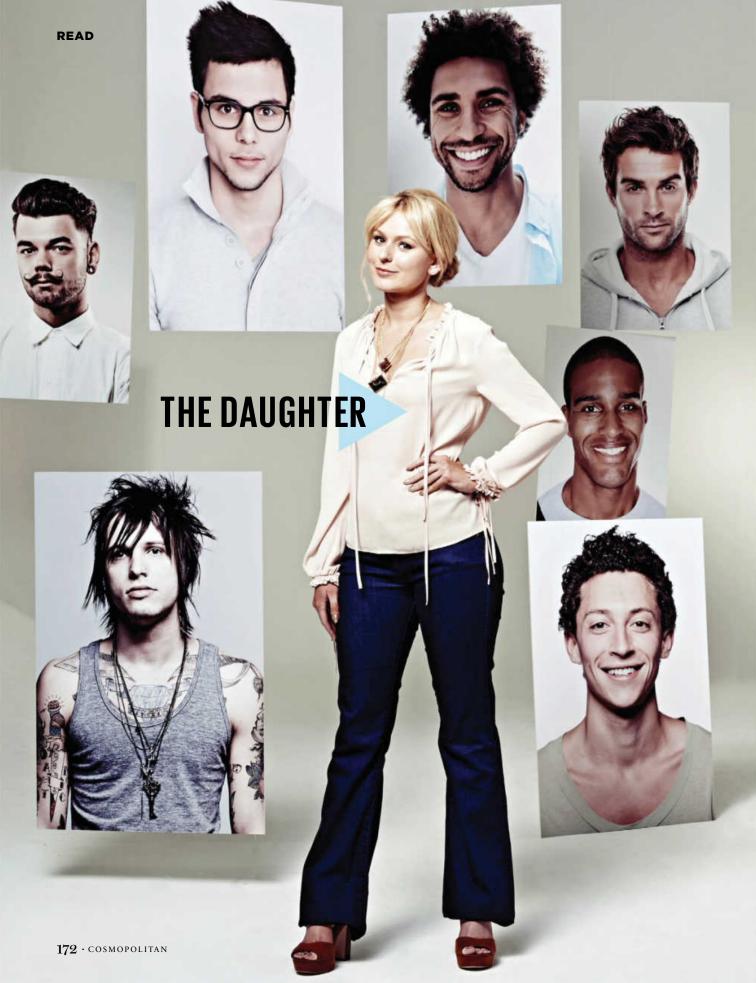
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What happened when he took over her Tinder?

How one brave writer let one even braver father take over her love life

have found the perfect dating tutor. He's 53, loves Aston Villa and, until recently, thought Tinder was something you light coal with – hey, he was a miner for 37 years.

A middle-aged man with a soft spot for flat caps probably isn't the first image that springs to mind when you picture a master of matchmaking – especially when the man in question goes by the name of Dad and hasn't been on a date since 1984.

But I'm looking for love and willing to

try anything to get it. Which is why I decided to hand my Tinder account – and my right to choose and message men I like the look of – to my father.

Why am I willing to try something so risky/stupid to find someone? Despite the odd fling, I've been single for three years. I have plenty of perky, pouty online dating profiles, and am determinedly proactive about meeting men. If I was looking for a job, I wouldn't sit at home hoping for employers to come knocking, and I don't see why finding a partner should be treated any differently.

Yet I still haven't found him. With a taste for bad boys with great hair and bad manners, I know where I'm going wrong, but the lesson never seems to stick. And it's not all my fault. Modern-day romance has been revolutionised by the wonders of Tinder, and it's no longer simply used as a hook-up app. Some users have even spotted a few famous faces in their feed, although I have yet to stumble across Leonardo DiCaprio as I indulge in a bus-stop swipe-a-thon.

The trouble with Tinder – and other dating sites and apps like it – is that it





makes the business of finding a mate feel fickle. Swiping right ('Yes!') and left ('No!') can feel like a game – the faces in your phone more like fellow contestants rather than real people.

The cute accountant you were keen to meet yesterday is quickly ghosted today, when you match with a buff engineer whose five-word bio manages to make you laugh out loud.

Dating disasters

My home screen is overflowing with Tinder matches, POF notifications and messages from Badoo (the dating app no one's heard of). But too often, I find I've swapped digits with a guy who'd rather post a picture of his breakfast on Instagram than text me back.

Even the ones I've managed to persuade to commit to an actual

date have fallen flat. My
lowest low came when
I met a handsome blond
on Tinder – who took me
on a first date to KFC. He
was pure perfection on the
surface: a Niall Horan
lookalike with added
swagger. But in the event,
not only did I waste painful
heels and an LBD on the
Colonel and a £9.99 bargain
bucket, I couldn't even order
a glass of wine to help me through it.

Perhaps he was unwilling to risk spending money on someone he'd met online – another common problem with modern dating. One man angrily told my friend, when she admitted she wasn't feeling it after three dates, that he'd "invested time and money" in her. Romantic.

So while finding a date has never proved too difficult, finding someone friendly, attractive and halfway normal is far more elusive. And making someone stick – without either of us being distracted by the thousands of other options out there – is even trickier.

And so it was this chorus line of dating disasters that eventually led

me to consider: what if, instead of showing an interest in every stranger with good hair I lay eyes on, I hand over my iPhone to someone else? Someone who has known me my whole life, with dating experience from the days when you had to actually leave your house to hook up?

My father has been with my mother for more than three decades, so he knows a thing or two about picking a keeper. And surely – with his protective, fatherly eye – *he* can distinguish the good from the bad?

He and I have always been close – we still go on shopping trips and coffee outings, and I've even been known to attend a football match or two with him. He's not beyond offering dating advice, either (although it sometimes has a pre-

feminist, "Order the most expensive thing on the menu, because if he really likes you, he'll buy it" feel about it).

But as I explain my idea to him, it's clear he has his reservations. He enjoys

spending Friday nights at the pub hanging out with men – not e-flirting with them on his daughter's behalf. But by pulling the sad face that's worked since I was three, I eventually talk him into it.

Take a swipe

Like most men who grew up preinternet, he's not a tech pro – he doesn't have a Facebook account, he has never experienced the pleasures of Candy Crush and he is perhaps the only person left in the UK who pays full price at Pizza Express.

This means when I first hand over my phone ("Hold it by the *edges*") I immediately lose a Daniel Craig lookalike as Dad wafts his hands

"My lowest low came when I was taken on a date to KFC"

around trying to get the hang of Tinder's swiping mechanism.

Thankfully, after explaining the basics to him and passing him his reading glasses, it turns out he has pretty good taste. He somehow manages to avoid the photos of weddings and erections that seem par for the course for me. He swipes right for a sun-kissed water skier (apparently he looks "exciting"), left for a drunk who keeps the pub I used to work in open pretty much single-handedly, and left again for a guy snuggled up to his pet pooch ("This bloke's snogging his dog!" Dad says, entirely missing the point

of the modern man trying to look sensitive).

Interestingly, he ignores the bio and age of every man he sees, and selects them purely based on how close they live to me and their

profile picture. His criteria: "A fresh-faced gent who has kind eyes," and definitely no men with "scruffy clothes and bushy beards".

"Dad's criteria:

'A fresh-faced

gent who has

Kind eyes'"

Cut to the chase

I'd expected him to be more discerning, but then I remember that when he met my mum, he was dazzled by her Farrah Fawcett blow-dry and kitten heels long before he fell in love with her intellect and wit. It seems that initial spark of attraction is crucial, whichever generation you're from.

The first guy who bites back is Kyle, a slim-built man who looks like a cross between Zac Efron and Chris Pine. I'm impressed. I'm also nervous as this is the point at which he has to start flirting, which feels like a car crash waiting to happen. I forgot Dad has always been a man of few

words – so instead of making painful, fake small talk, he goes straight for the jugular: 'Want to go out for dinner tomorrow night?'

Horrified, I imagine my match laughing at my desperation. "Why can't you just say hi, like a normal person?" I plead.

Fresh approach
"I'm not sitting here all day," Dad says

"I'm not sitting here all day," Dad says bluntly. And he has a point. Just five minutes later, my phone buzzes with the words, 'Sure – Mexican?' Oh. With my usual Tinder technique involving at least a lengthy Facebook check and a few flirty messages, this is

brand-new territory.

With Dad unwilling to give my address to a man off the Internet, he arranges for us to meet at the restaurant's bar the next evening. When I head for our date and spot Kyle in the corner of the room, he's wrapped in a chunky-knit jumper and a warm smile. Nice one, Dad.

A plate of nachos and two gin and tonics later,

I discover he's a personal trainer with a love of travelling and Aston Villa (maybe it was football-fan ESP that made Dad pick him).

After a couple more drinks, a sombrero selfie and a shared bowl of churros, I'm brave (drunk, whatever) enough to confess to Kyle that it was, in fact, my dad he'd been flirting with. I tell him about my experiment, which seems even more stupid when explaining it in person.

"Does your mother know?" he asks sombrely. It's a good sign – and as I get to know him, I realise Kyle is kind and charismatic. And he doesn't even ask to split the bill...

Afterwards, we exchange a few flirty Facebook messages, but as he's about to jet off for a fortnight in Spain, the conversation soon fizzles out.

I'm not ready to give up though, and with my Tinder account lighting



up with other matches Dad has picked for me, I get him to play Cupid again. Filtering through my feed, he stumbles across a red-haired guy whose opening line reads, 'I just Googled "sexy" and a picture of you came up'. Dad isn't impressed and replies, 'You'll get the same result if you search for "not interested".' With a smirk, we carry on scrolling.

Up next is David, who has a subtle scattering of freckles and an armful of tattoos. Peering over Dad's



nervously sipping a whiskey. As we're shown to our table, I notice we have the restaurant to ourselves. It might be a step up from KFC, but sensing awkwardness, I order a large G&T and resign myself to a long night.

I soon realise the beauty of getting Dad to pick my dates is that I haven't already exhausted all the small talk as usual, meaning I can ask him about his career, family and hobbies to fill the silence echoing around the empty room...

Magic touch The conversation eventually begins

The conversation eventually begins to flow, and after we've polished off our food and downed our drinks, David walks me to the bus stop.

"I was impressed by how forward you were," he says. "Most girls wait for the guy to make the first move."

Ah. I tell David it was actually my dad he'd been exchanging messages with. "So if this doesn't work out, I could always give your dad a

call then?" he asks.

As soon as I hop on the bus, my phone lights up with a message from David: 'I really enjoyed tonight and I'd love to see you again.' I keep my response succinct and to the point:

'Sure. Dinner – Friday night at 7?' It's a date. And I love my dad a bit more.

After five weeks, 23 matches and

two dates, the main thing I've learnt is that being forward clearly pays off when you're looking for love. After all these years of labouring over witty texts and hidden hints, all I had to do was ask.

JODIE'S DAD STUART SAYS: "I

think Tinder is a good way to meet people. The guys I wanted to avoid for Jodie were the laddish types surrounded by blokes in Ibiza, and those pictured with girls. Fortunately, I saw a lot of normal-looking men I'd be happy for my daughter to date. Jodie met both of the boys at dinnertime, in a busy restaurant with chaps I deemed looked decent, which I approved of. Internet dating is a good idea – in my day, if you asked a lady out for a drink you wouldn't know what you were getting until you met again. But with Tinder you can Google your date before you even agree to meet them. It's a whole new world..."

THE DATES



KYLE SAYS: "I liked the look of her, so when she asked me out I thought, 'Why not?' We had a good time."



DAVID SAYS: "It was quiet at first – but after a few drinks we got on well – and we're currently dating..."

JODIE'S VERDICT

"I had a great time with Kyle but with him going to Spain we met a dead end. David put a smile on my face straight away, and when he asked me out again I happily agreed. Watch this space!"

shoulder, I assume it'll be an instant left swipe – but he must know me better than I think, because he swipes right – and we match.

When I see he's been online but not messaged me, I pass my phone over to Dad and ask him to work his magic. An impressive 20 minutes later, and using the same cut-to-thechase approach, David agrees to meet me the following night for a curry.

As soon as I step through the restaurant doors, I spot David



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It's the 'miracle' pill thousands of women are being prescribed to cure acne. But now, many are reporting devastating effects on their sex lives. Cosmopolitan investigates...



hen she was first given the drug, a small brown plastic-coated pill no bigger than her fingernail, Sarah* was ecstatic at the prospect of curing the acne that had plagued her face - and destroyed her confidence - for the best part of a decade. The flaming, carbuncle-like spots first appeared when she was 11, and over nine years her doctor prescribed every cream and antibiotic available, to no avail. As she approached her 20th birthday, salvation came from a dermatologist at a local hospital. There was, Sarah was told, a powerful new drug that could help people like her. There were some possible side effects, of course, she was told quickly. But nothing more than the odd nosebleed - and even they were rare. Sarah agreed to try it. The dermatologist had her sign a disclaimer (of which she never received a copy), then gave her the prescription. The drug's name: Roaccutane.

It was remarkable. In a few months, Sarah's skin had almost completely cleared – but her quality of life had taken a terrifying turn. The nosebleeds came first – two or three a day. Next, her hair thinned, her joints ached, her eyes became so dry they were painful to close, and her skin – now as clear and smooth as a hotel-pressed pillowcase – was extremely tender to the touch, as if she had acute sunburn. And she felt low. A kind of black, lingering lowness she couldn't shift.

A brief Google shows symptoms like these, experienced by women taking Roaccutane, are not uncommon. In fact, it comes with a warning that depression, though rare, can be a side effect. After all, it's an extremely powerful drug – one of its key components is isotretinoin, which was originally developed as a chemotherapy drug. What the manufacturers don't make clear, however, is that there are reports that it could also kill your sex drive.

"I had a partner, and before Roaccutane our sex life was amazing," says Sarah, now 31. "But once I started taking it, I couldn't summon the energy to show affection through a kiss, let alone sex. And when we did try, it was so painful we'd have to stop." Eventually, Sarah's relationship broke down because the intimacy had gone.

And here's the frightening thing: hundreds of Roaccutane users, past and present, have reported devastating blows to their libido – even years *after* coming off the drug.

The sex myth

Roaccutane is seen by many doctors as a 'miracle' drug that cures acne by reducing the body's natural oil production. But its critics have long claimed its side effects can be far worse than users are led to expect when they're first prescribed it.

The drug was withdrawn from sale in the US, where it's known as Accutane, following thousands of lawsuits against Roche (the company that makes it), involving claims of birth defects, suicides and acute bowel conditions. The company says the decision was for business reasons, including "re-evaluation" of its product line, rather than concerns over safety.

Last November, Britain's official drug monitoring body, the Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), published its latest review of Roaccutane and adverse effects on mental health. It concluded that there was no proof of such side effects. Complaints about sexual

dysfunction have not, so far, been examined – despite widespread anecdotal evidence. The problem is that 'official' complaints to medical practitioners are thin on the ground. Some argue it's because patients are too embarrassed to discuss their sex lives with a GP. But much of the medical community who distribute Roaccutane say it's because the problems don't actually exist.

"We've received 10 complaints of sexual dysfunction from people while taking Roaccutane," a spokesperson for the MHRA told *Cosmopolitan*. "We look into every complaint in detail, but currently there's not enough evidence to suggest a link between sexual dysfunction and Roaccutane that would warrant updating the patient information leaflet."

Despite this, Sarah believes her loss of libido and the pain she experienced

"My sex life

ground to a halt

- it took years

for it to stop

being painful"

during sex *was* caused by the drug.

"My sex life just ground to a halt after a few months of being on it, and it took years for sex to stop being painful," she says. "I stopped taking it nine years ago, but it's changed how I think about sex to

this day. Nobody warned me what could happen, which is why I'm so angry about what I've been through."

Dysfunctional drug

And Sarah's not alone. A glance at internet forums reveals hundreds of Roaccutane users describing sexual problems: women's stories of vaginal dryness, painful sex, loss of libido and inability to orgasm, and men reporting erectile dysfunction and impotence.

Many users say symptoms continued for a while after they stopped taking it – or are apparently permanent. On one forum, a man writes: 'My ability to get an erection has disappeared; I

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don't feel horny any more'. One woman says, 'I've been off Roaccutane for over a year. While on it, if my boyfriend and I had sex, I'd be so dry it felt like sandpaper. I'd end up in tears as it was so painful.

Now, in order for him to enter me we have to use lubrication. I no longer have a desire for sex, and I'm often unable to orgasm'.

A 2005 study of male Roaccutane users in Spain did, in fact, suggest that sexual problems are more common than generally believed. Despite the size of the study (just 20 men took part), its results were startling: six of them developed erectile dysfunction.

Psychiatry professor Dr David Healy, a co-founder of the website RxISK, which collates information on drug side effects, has also warned of the dangers. "Roaccutane acts on our serotonin systems, and will alter the way most people function sexually," he says. "The response of many doctors to patients with these issues is, 'You've only been on it for a month or two, it can't be that.' But it is a real problem.

"Men and women are becoming genitally numb - some to a marked degree - and some don't seem to be recovering. Many patients are put on Roaccutane in their teens, and if it has such an impact on adults' sex drives, what effect is it having during puberty?"

The human cost

Amy* was 31 when she started taking

Roaccutane. Describing herself as 'incredibly private', she's felt unable to speak to doctors about her sexual issues.

"In the six weeks after I started taking Roaccutane, I fell into a deep depression," she tells Cosmopolitan."It didn't affect my libido much at the time, partly because I was single. But although I stopped taking it after around six weeks - and while Roche would probably deny it - the effects continue.

"I've been in a relationship for four years now, and my libido seems to have been crushed. I can't orgasm; it's as if the wiring isn't connected. Sometimes, sex makes me very sad."

In an email to his parents before taking his life in 2011, Jesse Jones, 24, a musician from Dorset, cited loss of libido since taking Roaccutane as a cause of despair.

'I used to have to try to stop myself from thinking about girls all the time; now I could hardly care less, he wrote.

His father Derek, who made Dying For Clear Skin, a documentary about

Roaccutane after his son's death, strongly believes the drug causes sexual dysfunction. "Jesse's lack of libido impacted him a lot," Derek says. "I've since spoken to hundreds of families who've lost loved ones [Roaccutane users who've taken their own lives], and many are adamant there's a link. Low mood can cause low libido, sure, but it works the other way too – sexual problems can have a bearing on your state of mind."

Case for the defence

Still, most medical practitioners don't believe a warning about sexual dysfunction is warranted. Dr Adam Friedmann, of London's Harley Street Dermatology Clinic, prescribes Roaccutane, which he describes as 'very effective' and says he's never had

but it may be linked to depression," he says. "I always mention the risk of mood changes with Roaccutane, and no dermatologist would refute that it can cause depression, but it's rare."

After undergoing therapy, Sarah is recovering from her depression, but she wants to see changes in the way Roaccutane is prescribed.

"Doctors should ask far more think twice before taking it. "Chances

a patient complain of sexual problems. "That's not to say it doesn't happen,

questions before handing it out," she says. She also hopes talking about her experience will make others are, nothing terrible will happen to you. But is clear skin really

worth risking years of misery and ruining your sex life for?"

But what does the manufacturer say?**

"Roche Products Ltd and the regulatory authorities constantly evaluate the safety of all medicines. In the case of Roaccutane (isotretinoin), the regulators agree its clinical benefits outweigh the risks. Isotretinoin is an effective medicine for the treatment of severe acne, with the majority of patients cured of acne after one treatment cycle."

Passion killers

THE PILL

About 15% of women taking oral contraceptives report a decrease in libido.

Talk to your GP about alternatives or crack out the condoms.



ANTIHISTAMINES

Some over-the-counter pills used to treat allergies are linked to a temporary loss of libido, but only while you're taking them.

Fish oil and vitamin C work as natural histamine blockers.



INSOMNIA MEDICATION

If you've been prescribed tablets containing benzodiazepines and notice a dip in your sex life, they may be to blame.

Talk to your GP about taking melatonin supplements instead.



STRONG PAINKILLERS

Those containing opiates, such as Nurofen Plus, can affect libido, though the effects don't last.

It depends on what's wrong. Try a lighter painkiller, or for PMS you can pop evening primrose oil.



SINGLE? SETTLED? WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED



TURNIT UP, TURNIT ON

Listening to Chris Martin's adenoidal bleatings might not sound like the quickest route to orgasm for everyone, but a new study by Montreal's McGill University showed that playing music while you're getting horizontal maximises your arousal levels. That's because music releases dopamine – the chemical that makes you feel all nice and happy. Want to know what tunes to spoon to? Taking into account all of Spotify's 2.5 million 'sex' playlists (yes, that's a thing), Intro by The XX came out top. And guess what?

Coldplay made it to No.3.

Happy streaming.

PHOTOGRAPH DENNIS PEDERSEN

This month we'll be...



Emma, Jenni & Cat

Cosmopolitan's JENNIFER SAVIN and friends Emma and Cat are dreaming of all things baked and tasty

Reminiscing about Paris

This time last year, I worked in the kitchen of a fancy château near Paris and fell completely in love with everything dessert-related (namely because the resident pastry chef was hot). I would spend hours studying French cookbooks, trying to up my language game, and became obsessed with rosewater crème brûlée and tarte au citron – if you ever want to impress somebody/me. definitely give either of those a go. Totally decadent.



Making a **Z** run for it

With all the baking and overindulaina aoina on this month, it's a good thing another friend, Belle, and I are also doing some pretty hardcore training for the Great Scottish Run on 4 October. The right running shoes make all the difference - I'm currently lusting after these bad boys from Nike, £140, Swoon,



As an avid fan of The Great British Bake Off. I've been hooked on the latest series. I love how quintessentially British it is and how intricate the show-stopper recipes are. Mary Berry is definitely part of my 'fantasy family' line-up - can you imagine how amazing Sunday lunch at her place would be? Plus, her nails-and-blazer combos are always so on-point.



Baking up a storm

In honour of National Cupcake Week on 14-20 September. I've decided to challenge Emma and Cat to our very own bake off (like we really need an excuse). Our favourite recipe is Baileys chocolate orange cupcakes; they're deceptively easy to make and far too tasty not to share. Fight you for the last one...



Getting inspired

Food bloggers are having a serious moment right now, and my Instagram feed is chock-full of gorgeous foodie pics (meaning I'm permanently hungry). I'm obsessed with What Jessica Baked Next - she makes the most incredible cakes, biscuits and bread - and Madeleine Shaw, health coach and author of Get The Glow, whose healthy meals prove that eating well doesn't have to be a chore.







LAUREN FRANKLIN finds crossing the class divide isn't all it's cracked up to be...

'Google told

me that his

watch cost

more than

my entire

vear's rent

I'm like Ryan Gosling in The Notebook," I wailed down the phone to my housemate, from the toilet of a Michelin-starred restaurant. I was on my second date with John*, who, I had only just twigged, was at least two class brackets above me.

On our first date, the previous night

(smooth moves, Franklin), he'd treated me to drinks in a swanky bar. It went so well, he asked me out to dinner the next night. This time I insisted on paying.

At the restaurant, a glance at the prices sent a shiver down my spine. As a freelance writer, I'm comfortable, but don't exactly spend my time lounging around in

diamond-encrusted bikinis. There was no way I could afford this place, even if it was my turn. I tried to focus on the conversation, which turned to our upbringings. John went to boarding school; I went to a regular comprehensive in Essex. He revealed that his ex had attended the royal wedding ('the groom's side'), and showed me his family crest on his pinky ring. When he briefly left the table, Google told me his watch cost

more than my entire year's rent. His life was so lavish, I felt totally inadequate, and had a burning need to hide my comparative poverty. So when the bill came, I handed over my card without looking at the damage.

Looking back, I'm pretty annoyed with myself (and the £200 hole in my bank account). But I still liked John,

> and wanted to eradicate my insecurity. So I called my friend Stefan, who is also from a 'normal' background but whose girlfriend's dad is an actual lord.

"So, does she care that you're poor?" I asked him, oh-so delicately.

"I get paranoid that she does," he admitted. "Her parents don't think I'm marriage material. If some

Baron von Rah comes along, I worry I'll get dumped. But we're happy."

I wasn't filled with confidence, but John was still interested and so was I (despite his nicknaming me 'Essex'). So I continued breezily playing Russian roulette with my card on our dates, petrified that at any moment it might be declined.

When I finally suggested we just spend an evening at his place, he said, "I've never been to yours, let's do

that." As I feared, he was appalled by my life. He called my non-airconditioned flat 'uninhabitable', and claimed that hunkering down in my 'box room' to watch Netflix made him feel claustrophobic. Offended, I told him to leave. I'd put in the effort to match his lifestyle - surely he could do the same for me?

Apparently not; we haven't spoken since. But at least I can afford to eat again this month.

Are you our

Ever read this column and thought, 'I have a crazy sex life and am willing to share those details with Cosmopolitan for the good of womankind? If so, this column could be yours. If you're totally honest, upfront and funny, and a UK resident aged 18 and over, you could soon be reporting for us from the front line of modern dating. Terms and conditions apply: for full details, and to enter, head to Cosmopolitan co.uk/column, and tell us in no more than 200 words why you'd like to be considered, and regale us with your (single) most memorable sex and relationship escapade. We'll take it

from there.



COSM



'Seeing him was bittersweet'

Hayley Thompson, 25, is a writer and blogger from London

I met James six years ago, in a karaoke bar. He was wearing grey tracksuit bottoms that I'd eventually grow to hate, but I was still intrigued by him.

The problem was the guy who'd introduced us liked me, so when a relationship developed, we agreed to keep it secret and not get too serious. On our first night together, I told him, "I promise I won't fall in love with you."

I've always regretted those words – James was my best friend as well as my first love but, thanks to our agreement, I'd lie next to him physically straining not to tell him how I really felt. After 18 months, I decided the best way to keep my promise was by making James *believe* I didn't love him – and, stupidly, we agreed to see other people.

I'd tell him about other men to see if he'd stop me – and when he didn't, I decided he couldn't love me the way I loved him. When we broke up, after a huge row, I cut all ties.

Three years later, we got back in touch via Facebook, and James dropped a bombshell: all that time, he'd loved me too. We were both angry about what we'd missed out on.

So when we met for lunch, I was nervous as hell. It was clear we still had a bond – we were soon chatting and laughing like old times. But wondering what could have been made our meeting bittersweet.

We continued our date on into the evening and he did

come back to mine, where we both fell asleep on the sofa. But while I did feel a familiar tug of yearning, it was completely platonic. It's sad to admit it, but what I feel for James now is just a memory of being in love."

Would you see him again?

"When we hugged goodbye, we promised to meet up again, but not romantically. If he ever needs to stay in London, he knows my sofa's always available."









James Key, 27, is a fitness instructor from Leeds

Everyone has a 'one that got away,' and Hayley is mine. Part of me still loves her, even now. When we were introduced, I wasn't looking for a girlfriend, but we gravitated towards each other. We had nothing particular in common, but got along as if we'd known each other for years.

As we grew closer, our 'rule' about being more like friends than a couple meant that as we fell in love, we didn't tell each other. Perhaps Hayley was waiting for me to say I'd changed my mind – but I never did. By the end, we were long-distance, and she started dating other guys. I'd give her advice, all the while thinking, 'No!' – but I wanted her to be happy, and saw it as proof that she didn't think of us as anything serious. I decided I'd been right to hide my feelings.

When we broke up, I thought it was because of the distance but, looking back, it came down to mixed messages. I wasn't too sad at first – but as I realised what I'd lost and that Hayley had loved me, I was devastated.

I was nervous about seeing Hayley again, but when she warned me not to turn up in tracksuit bottoms, I knew not much had changed. As soon as I saw her, I had butterflies.

I felt just as comfortable around her as when we first met, and she looks great – she's brunette now and it really suits her. I've no regrets, but although I've been in relationships

since, they've never quite matched up to what

matched up to wha I had with Hayley.

* Would you like to be reunited with your first love? Email us at first.love@ cosmopolitan.co.uk.

Would you see her again?

"I think it would be great if we met again, but I don't know how likely that is. We did make a promise to stay in touch though – and we're good at keeping those..."









Order by 6pm and collect for free tomorrow from midday.



BEST SEX EVER WAS...

with another woman's boyfriend

Carrie*, 34, still fantasises about the time she slept with a man she'd met only weeks earlier – and who, it turned out, already had a long-term partner

It's a weird sensation having another woman's boyfriend's head between your thighs, his lips locked around your clitoris, his penis swollen and seconds from entering you. But that was all part of the thrill the first time I slept with Ben*.

It started a few weeks earlier on a spa weekend with some friends – Ben was there with his girlfriend. Our eyes kept meeting in the restaurant at dinner, then, the next day, we got chatting in the sauna. There was obviously a connection between us and, as he left, he dropped his business card in my robe pocket.

A week later I dropped him an email: 'Hi Ben. We met at the spa last weekend. Do you always carry your card with you in saunas?'

It was a vague, flirty mail intended to see if he'd bite. Minutes later he did. Numbers were exchanged and within 24 hours he was telling me how he'd fantasised about sneaking up behind me in the spa shower and, to quote him, "Fucking you to bits."

He lived 40 miles away so we planned to meet three weeks later for lunch. We both booked half-days off – an unspoken agreement that this was going to end in sex. I knew

my friends would be horrified but I was so flattered, I felt no guilt.

After we'd eaten, we headed towards my flat. The attraction between us was incredible. It was raining, so we shared my umbrella, his hand lightly touching my hip during the short walk back. The minute I closed the door he grabbed me, his tongue on my neck, then my mouth, his hands sliding down my back and up between my

legs. Frantically, we flung off what clothes we could, then made for the bedroom.

He threw me on the bed

— I was now wearing only
the black lace bra and
knickers I'd carefully
chosen that morning. His
body was even better than
I'd remembered in the spa

— a hard torso and, I could
see, an even harder erection.
Slowly he started to lick
the insides of my thighs,
his fingers pulling down

the edges of my knickers. Within seconds his tongue was inside me, flicking up and down. He couldn't get enough. Every few minutes he'd come up, suck my nipples, his penis hard against my stomach. I pleaded with him to get inside me, but instead he

teased me, going back and forth between my breasts and my clitoris.

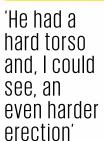
Finally he stood up, smiled, and pulled his trousers down. He climbed on top of me and entered me with such force that it almost took my breath away. We kept switching – me straddling him, rocking back and forth, then him flipping me over and thrusting so hard we both came at almost the same time. Afterwards,

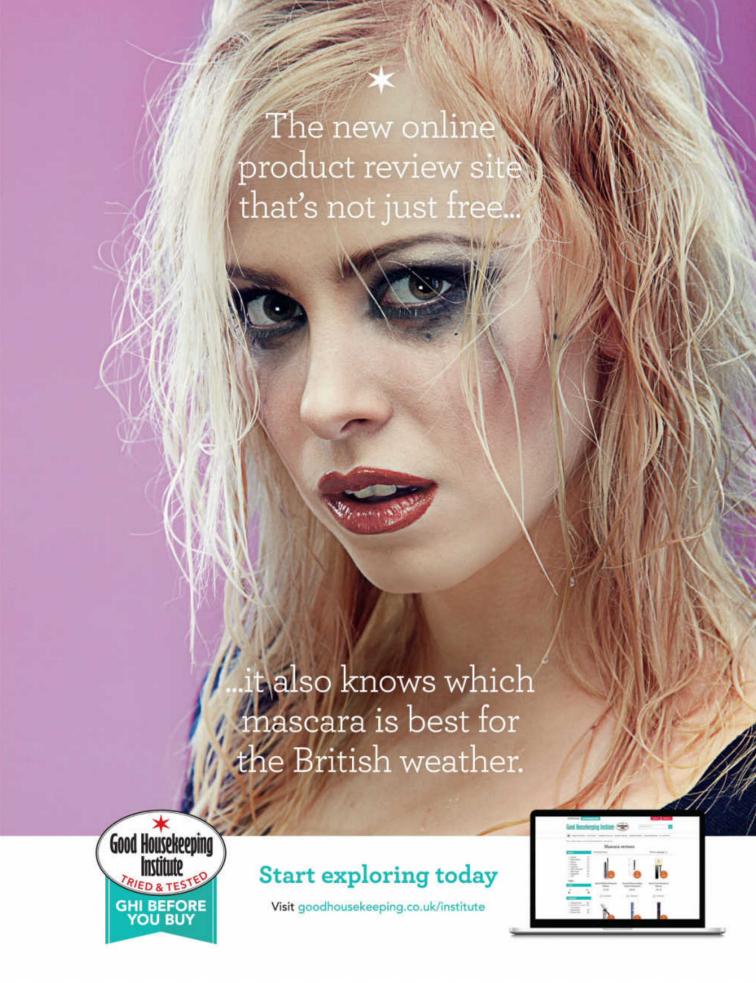
lying there, both of us exhausted, I thought about how he'd go home and climb into bed with the woman he'd shared his life with for five years. I asked if he felt guilty. "No," was all he said, before he kissed me and left.

But he must have felt something, and it showed three months later, when we met for our fourth and final time. During oral sex, his phone rang. Breathless,

he answered. It was her, calling to say goodnight. The guilt was too much for us both, and we agreed to stop.

As a parting gift, he bought me a vibrator and every time I used it for those months following, I thought about that first time we had sex.





SEXUAL HEALING



Cosmopolitan's sex psychotherapist, RACHEL MORRIS, tackles your most intimate issues

I need a real man

I'm attracted to well-built, muscly men who look as though they could pick me up and throw me over their shoulder, but every time I've actually been out with one who fits the bill physically, they've turned out to be total wimps in the bedroom – or lazy, expecting me to do the work. Where are all the real men?

Judge books by their covers much? All men are real men. If you want a two-dimensional caricature of a man to fulfil your caveman fantasy, close your eyes and do what everyone else does - make him up! Muscle isn't an indicator of real strength - and in fact men who beef up might be responding to physical or emotional insecurities. Even if it's for pride or vanity, a man who spends all his time sculpting his form may think that all he has to do is lie back and be adored. Take your beefcake glasses off and look for a man who doesn't need to kiss his guns to prove his true strength.



He hates that I won't swallow

I don't mind going down on my boyfriend – sometimes I even enjoy it – but to be honest, I only do it because I love him and he loves it. So when he acts disappointed that I won't let him come in my mouth or swallow (it makes me gag) it seems ungrateful! Why do men love it so much?

Men naturally get the urge to thrust forward during orgasm; pulling backwards goes against every instinct and interrupts the climactic sensation. Imagine it from his perspective - he's enveloped in a hot, warm, tight space, the tension is building and he's ready to release when suddenly he's expelled into the cold, thin air. As for being swallowed (and swallowing), the joy seems to be more symbolic (of dominance and/or intimacy) than physically pleasurable. Be understanding yet clear: no amount of disappointment will change your gag reflex. Why waste time feeling indignant when you could be exploring alternative endings?

HE WANTS TO KNOW

Am I bad at foreplay?

My girlfriend won't let me touch or go down on her for more than 30 seconds. She says she likes to concentrate on me, which sounds nice but feels wrong. She swears it's not that I'm bad at foreplay but what else could it be?

It could be a lack of trust and/or fear of intimacy. Many women have complicated relationships with their bodies that manifest as shyness, insecurity, shame and even disgust. Some struggle with entitlement; they know how to give but not receive. She might worry you'll expect her to orgasm and she can't. Build trust by getting her to receive in non-sexual ways first. Foot massage, anyone?

He wears me out in bed

My new boyfriend is sexually exhausting. He changes position every minute (just as I'm getting into it) and he stays hard forever so I end up sore. He rates himself in bed so it's tricky saying anything without crushing him. How can I calm him down... nicely?

A wise woman once told me men don't grow up until women stop mothering them. He probably wouldn't appreciate you protecting him from the truth - and he might be confused as to why you've let him carry on. We can't blame him for thinking a sexual decathlon and permanent erection make him The Don – that's what porno blokes do and clearly porno women all love it. It's your job to set the record straight. He might be relieved that not only does he not have to try so hard but also that you don't even want him to.

Have a question for Rachel?

Email rachel@cosmopolitan.co.uk



No family. No friends. No fanfare. And certainly no crippling financial outlay. JO USMAR explains why eloping is the thoroughly modern way to get married (just hope your family's still talking to you afterwards)

've never been one of those girls who dreams of a big fat wedding. I've never marched around with a pillowcase 'veil' over my head as a child, and I have never pored over chintzy bridal Pinterest boards. But I have always believed in marriage, and the legal and emotional security that comes with 'I do'. My boyfriend and I had been together for 10 years, so the subject had come up... but it was always dropped because we couldn't face even thinking about the hoopla that surrounds most weddings.

But then, one day Ben suggested we elope. "Just imagine," he said, looking

wistful. "No dramas, no stress and no enormous bill. Just you, me and a bottle of bubbly. Or three. We'd have a secret engagement and then a secret wedding." Oh, but that sounded good. In fact, it sounded *great*. Great – but impossible, surely? People only elope in films, or if they're unexpectedly pregnant and their families still harbour 1950s sensibilities. No one runs away to get hitched in real life, especially when they actually *like* their families. Do they?

As it turns out: yes, they do. There are a growing number of UK firms specialising in elopements, and up to a third of weddings between UK nationals took place abroad in 2012. While they weren't all elopements (or 'guerrilla weddings' as they've been)



Framboise Noire

= HEART OF DARKNESS =



SHAY & BLUE





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SB

labelled), they point to a growing discontent with the cost, pressure and unrealistic expectations the wedding industry heaps on couples to host the 'perfect' day.

"There's a definite rise in the number of couples choosing to elope," says Kat Williams of alternative-wedding website Rocknrollbride.com. "I see people doing it for a number of reasons – if they're older or marrying for a second time, if they foresee family problems or simply because it's cheaper. More people are also choosing weddings with just one or two guests – but that doesn't mean the day can't be romantic or creative."

Experts say the average wedding takes 250 hours to plan (more than six weeks' worth of working days) and costs a staggering £20,983. That's enough for a deposit on a flat – and an expense that can be avoided if you don't invite 100 people to drink champagne on your tab.

Even couples who don't have family or financial worries are eloping. Take, for example, stars such as Daniel Craig and Rachel Weisz (whose only guests were his daughter and her son) and Cheryl Fernandez-Versini (who snuck off to Mustique to marry her French boyfriend with just four guests).

"Weddings bring high expectations," says counselling psychologist Dr Ellie Milby. "Society tells you your wedding should be the happiest day of your life, and when people are investing so much time, energy and money into it, there's a pressure to get it just right. On top of that, relatives with set ideas may find it difficult to compromise. It can be nearly impossible to keep everybody happy."

Another factor is pride – when you feel you have to impress not just your guests, but the Facebook voyeurs who'll be picking over your snaps.

"When it comes to weddings and social media, it can be easy to fall into the 'compare and despair' trap, which can leave you feeling inadequate," says Dr Milby. It's also intrusive. Even if



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'For Ben and me, the appeal of eloping was that we could keep hold of what getting married meant to *us*, without being swayed by what others wanted'

.....

you don't post pictures of your day on social media, you can be pretty sure your friends will. Then their 'friends' – including people you've never met in your life – will be privy to your most intimate experiences. Knowing your wedding will become public property exacerbates the pressure to make it bigger and better.

Eloping offers an escape from that – a chance to truly switch off. "A recent survey found that 60% of people feel exhausted by their 'plugged-in' lifestyles, which explains why we're increasingly opting for

social-media detoxes," Dr Milby says.

"Rather than being bombarded by wedding advice from friends or spending hours searching Pinterest for the perfect table centrepieces, eloping offers a real alternative – bringing freedom from the scrutiny of others and the opportunity to take a break from the digital world."

For Ben and me, the appeal of eloping was that we could keep hold of what getting married meant to *us*, without being swayed by what other people wanted. A wedding should be about the bride and groom making a lifelong (fingers crossed) commitment, rather than figuring out who to seat next to Fun Uncle Rodney. I *love* a good wedding, but the organising, stress and pressure? No thanks. As we saw it, our only options were either to stay unmarried or elope, and we decided on the latter. And it was the best thing we ever did.

Although Barbados is the preferred spot for eloping Brits, we chose Puglia, Italy. It's not only one of the most stunning, unspoilt parts of the

Mediterranean, but marriages between UK nationals are legal there and you don't have to be a resident in the country beforehand (as you do in France, for example).

More unusually for an elopement, we hired a wedding planner. While we didn't want the trappings of a normal wedding, we still wanted something beautiful and romantic and a planner fitted our 'stress-free' policy perfectly. We don't speak Italian either, so having someone to book the ceremony and deal with the paperwork was a no-brainer.

As we planned our wedding, however, I did start to have some misgivings. We couldn't tell people because the 'Why can't I come?' questions would start. And although my mum passed away when I was 20, it felt weird discussing photographers with a stranger, when our families and closest friends were all in the dark. I'd sometimes feel a gnawing fear in the pit of my stomach - was I doing the right thing? But then I'd think of the expense, hassle and family politics we were avoiding, and my fear would disappear.

It was only when I was trying on a wedding dress on my own that I had a mini breakdown. I suddenly realised I desperately wanted my sister to know. Ben agreed it would be just too weird having strangers as witnesses, so we let Alex and Andy, her husband, into our secret. They were thrilled to be involved, and thought it was the perfect way for us to get married. They also agreed our families would (most likely) be pleased for us too...

The day itself was everything we'd wanted. Having told everyone but Alex and Andy that we were off on holiday, the four of us left for Puglia and spent the morning of our wedding drinking champagne by the pool of our hotel (it seemed a little pointless sticking to the whole 'not seeing each other before the ceremony' shtick).

When the councillor who was marrying us said, "It's an honour to



dress she shopped for alone

'It was only when I was trying on a wedding dress on my own that I had a mini breakdown. I suddenly realised I desperately wanted my sister to know'

......

officiate such a small wedding – one that's just about two people in love," it summed up our sentiments exactly. It was intimate, romantic and loads of fun. Afterwards, we all had dinner at a restaurant, where the other customers applauded us to our seats. The next few days were perfect, spent lounging by the pool and eating amazing food.

Then we came home.

To say I was scared to tell people would be the understatement of the decade. A glance at elopement forums reveals that couples coming back from 'holiday' sheepishly wearing rings can get a lot of flack.

'My parents were pissed', says one Reddit user. 'Apparently I "owed" them the opportunity to have a big party. And they were hurt, because "weddings are

chance to walk me down the aisle', says another. And, most terrifyingly, one says: 'Married three years now, and not spoken to my family since. They hate me'.

Luckily, when we told our nearest and dearest, most of them understood we'd had the best wedding for us - although lots of people called us 'brave', like we'd broken a big taboo.

The only one who had a wobble was a friend who'd had a massive wedding that took years to plan. Our choice was beyond him - he'd never once considered ditching tradition.

Our big day cost £3,000, and US research says those who spend more are more likely to get divorced, making us around 64% less likely to split than those who splashed out £12,800 or above. Then again, the same research also says that elopers are 12.5 times more likely to get divorced than people who have more than 200 people at their wedding you win some, you lose some...

It's a huge decision, certainly not to be undertaken on a whim. Not every family will take the news as well as ours did. But if it's what you want and you can deal with any fallout, then I recommend packing your bags.

There's bound to be an Italian palazzo or Elvis chapel with your and his – name on it... ◆

PHOTOGRAPHS PHOTOSHOT/STARSTOCK. WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHS FRANCESCO GRAVINA (FOTOGRAVINA.IT). WEDDING PLANNING ANNA CALZOLAIO (INTHEMOODFORLOVEWEDDINGS.COM



Fun, fearless FEMALES

As Cosmopolitan reveals its first signature scent, meet the lucky readers who became the faces of Cosmopolitan The Fragrance!

qualities they found in our winners Lisa, 32, Stacey, 22, and Katy, 22 (above).

Available exclusively at Boots.com from 1 September and Boots stores from 7 September. Prices start from £20.





Online-dating WTFs!

TINDER SURPRISE

I met a guy from Tinder for brunch one Sunday morning. Everything was relatively civilised until he swaggered back from the toilet, leant in so the family next to us couldn't hear and said, "So, I've scoped it out back there and there's no CCTV if you're up for a quick one." EMILY, 29, PA, LONDON

MY FAMILY AND OTHER ANIMALS

Imagine your date suggests you meet at the zoo, where pretty much his entire family works, and then insists you all have sandwiches together outside the safari enclosure. Yeah, that was a memorable one.

DANIELLE*, 26,

ENTREPRENEUR, BRISTOL

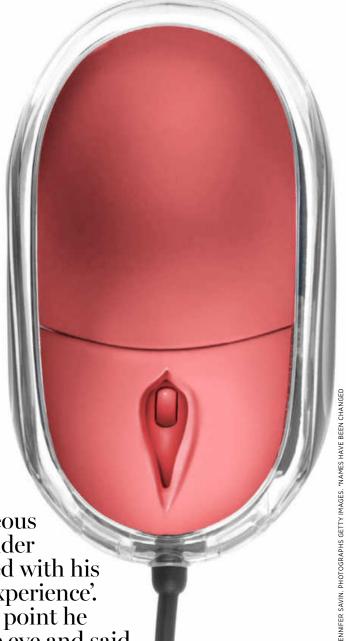
LONESOME TONIGHT

Walking into the pub, I clocked my date from Plenty of Fish. He was bent over a table with four drinks all to himself. He said it was happy hour, so I bought two myself – but by the time I got back from the bar, he'd nearly finished all of his. He then ordered a bottle of wine to 'share', dragged me to a karaoke bar and belted out an entire album-worth of Elvis songs. There was no second date. AMELIA, 31, ARCHITECT, **MANCHESTER**

INSIDE INFORMATION

I met a gorgeous guy from Tinder who was obsessed with his lack of 'female experience'. Seriously, at one point he looked me in the eye and said, "I've only ever been inside two."

CHLOE*, 25, PRESS OFFICER, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE



TIME FOR BED

I don't think I can see you again... you've got tired eyes." That's how my 'seemingly normal' online date gave me the brush-off.

DAMIAN, 37, FILM EDITOR, SALFORD

MOVES LIKE BLAGGER

Before meeting my date, I'd made a few jokes about being a dancer (I'm not... I just meant on a Friday night), which seemed to go down well. She was from Russia, so it all got a bit lost in translation and she thought I was an actual professional performer. She quizzed me on the style of dancing I specialise in until I blurted out, "I'm an urban dancer," before attempting a very awkward pop-and-lock move in my chair. We managed another 10 minutes of uncomfortable small talk before she left. BEN, 29, ACCOUNT DIRECTOR, EAST SUSSEX

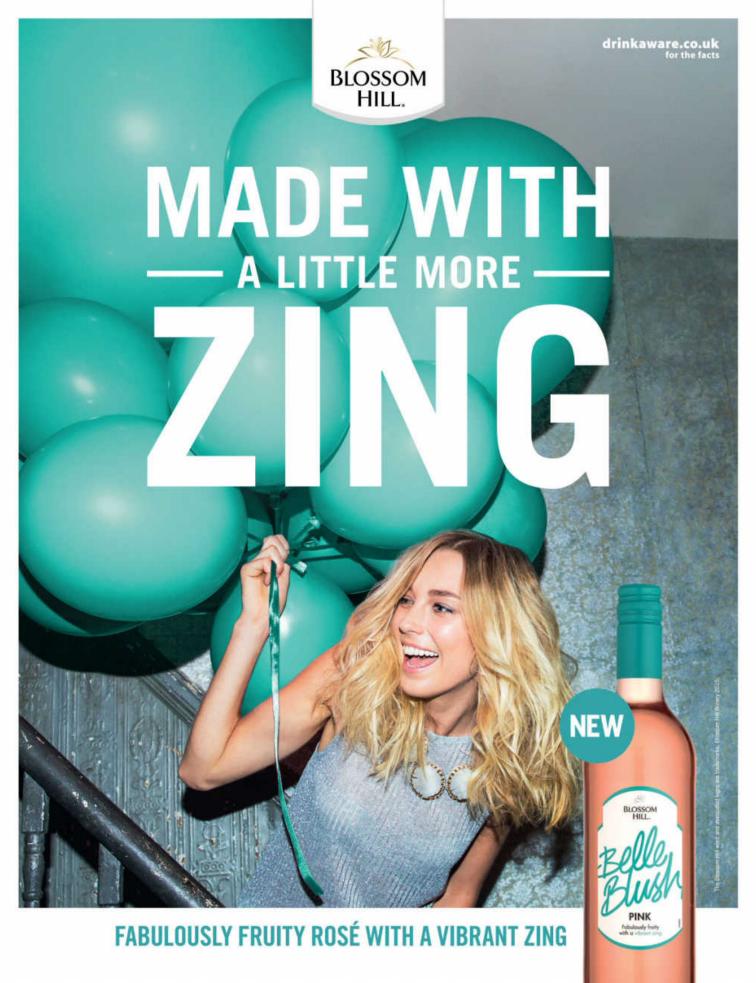
FOOT. IN. MOUTH.

Laist

I did an online stalk of my Happn date before we met, but stupidly forgot what we had and hadn't actually chatted about. While on the subject of festivals, I asked, "What did you make of the one in Croatia?" - then realised I'd only seen the pictures on her Facebook profile, and to make it worse, that festival was eight years earlier (it was a very thorough stalk). I managed to convince her we'd chatted about it on Happn, but I could see the mistrust in her eyes... TRISTAN, 28, ELECTRICIAN, **SUFFOLK**

TEXTUAL HEALING

Alana* only had one photo on her online dating profile but looked hot, so I arranged a date. Of course, she looked *nothing* like her picture, so after one drink I legged it to the toilet and texted my mate saying, 'Help! Alana is NOT hot!' But by some inexplicable techno glitch, I sent it to her! She was upset, and in an effort to lighten the mood I joked, "I guess I won't be coming back to yours, then?" To which she astonishingly replied, "Why, don't you want to?" STUART, 31, ACCOUNTANT, BATH **♦**



BECAUSE LIFE'S ALL ABOUT THE 5-9





There's no place like (a stranger's)

Airbnb revolutionised travel, allowing us to rent locals' homes for a fraction of the price of a hotel. Here, its bosses tell us 10 of the best to stay in

BEATS A HOTEL BECAUSE...

It's loft-style living in the heart of east London, with city views and a 1,400-sq-ft lounge. Sure, it ain't that cheap, but if three of you (the maximum) share this, it's a relative bargain; a junior suite at Shoreditch's Ace Hotel, around the corner, could set you back £449.

IT'S A STEAL BECAUSE...

The flat has a huge kitchen and dining area with wood floors, exposed brick walls and a soaring wood ceiling.

YOU WOULDN'T EXPECT...

The indoor hammock, 3mwide movie screen and piano.

WHAT THE WEBSITE DOESN'T

TELL YOU The hosts leave you a guidebook they've written. Their best tip? Cocktails at the Mayor of Scaredy Cat Town, a nearby bar with a secret room you enter via a fridge door.

Book it! Go to Airbnb. co.uk/rooms/5145517

Play



Berlin From £22pp per Night

BEATS A HOTEL BECAUSE...

Not all of us can afford the penthouse suite in a hotel. A two-bed loft at nearby Soho House Berlin costs from £909. IT'S A STEAL BECAUSE...

It's a two-bedroom apartment packed with designer furniture and artwork. Plus, it boasts an amazing roof terrace in one of the hippest parts of the city, Prenzlauer Berg, from only £87 per night for the whole place.

YOU WOULDN'T EXPECT...

To be able to gaze at the clouds from the free-standing bath in the bathroom. There's also an in-house bar hidden behind a wooden cabinet.

Dreams are made of this...

WHAT THE WEBSITE DOESN'T

TELL YOU The host usually leaves the wine fridge full with a collection he replenishes every year at a wine festival in northern Italy. Now that's our sort of host.

Book It! Go to Airbnb. co.uk/rooms/203634

Malibu, California

BEATS A HOTEL BECAUSE...

You can't really afford a beach-front hotel in this exclusive area unless you're actual Hollywood royalty.

IT'S A STEAL BECAUSE...

The house is available for £251 per night, and for that you get three bedrooms (and four double beds, three bathrooms and a terrace).

YOU WOULDN'T EXPECT...

That you can take your dog. We've also got it on good authority from the owners that you can see dolphins from the shore "almost every day".

WHAT THE WEBSITE DOESN'T

TELL YOU The house was designed so that the ocean is visible from every single room (and that includes the bathrooms). So go easy on what you do in there.

Book It Go to Airbnb. co.uk/rooms/172175



BEATS A HOTEL BECAUSE...

This two-bedroom pad rents from £105 per night, so you can be part of Brooklyn's hip waterfront scene for the price of a round of drinks. A bunk-bed room at the nearby Wythe Hotel costs from £189.

IT'S A STEAL BECAUSE...

It's a three-minute walk to the East River ferry for access to Midtown Manhattan – or for amazing views of the city's skyline, take the subway over Williamsburg Bridge.

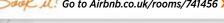
YOU WOULDN'T EXPECT...

So many little extras – a current copy of *Time Out*, plug adaptors, posh linen, shampoo, a killer laundry service just down the road...

WHAT THE WEBSITE DOESN'T TELL YOU You get

views of the city and river from the roof, fresh flowers on arrival – and the fireplace makes it extra cosy in winter. (FYI, there's no lift, so you have to carry your luggage up to the second floor.)

Book it! Go to Airbnb.co.uk/rooms/741456 >





WIN A TRIP TO ZURICH!

We've teamed up with Emmi Choco Lait to give you the chance to win a two-night weekend trip for two to Zurich, the most vibrant city in Switzerland. You'll get return flights with Swiss International Air Lines and stay in one of the seven beautiful Sorell Hotels. The lucky winners will enjoy everything Zurich has to offer, with its fascinating winding streets, galleries, museums, shops and lively nightlife. No surprise it's one of central Europe's hippest destinations. Oh, and pretty good for chocolate too. Enter at Facebook.com/EmmiCHOCOLAITUK.



indulgence into your day.

So even if you're busy rushing between work, home and friends, make time to pick up a cup. Enjoy it as an alternative to your usual afternoon pick me up. And an added bonus: it's been cleverly designed to be ready for you to grab and enjoy on the go, straight from the fridge. Who could resist?

a smooth, light, sophisticated

treat, guaranteed to inject a bit of









Rio, Brazil FROM £54PP PER NIGHT

spoils you with wine and

we it! Go to Airbnb.

cake on arrival. Result!

co.uk/rooms/1020826

BEATS A HOTEL BECAUSE...

You get a two-storey house with four bedrooms (sleeping up to eight) and a terrace with views of the Pico dos Quatro mountain.

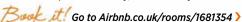
IT'S A STEAL BECAUSE...

Upmarket Joá neighbourhood is known as the Beverly Hills of Rio, and you're in the centre of it. And did we mention the pool? Seriously,

if ever there was a pool to go skinny-dipping in, this is it.

YOU WOULDN'T EXPECT...

Host Flavia leaves you a welcome basket packed with delicious local snacks. WHAT THE WEBSITE **DOESN'T TELL YOU** If you get a not-so-sunny day, Flavia recommends a trip to nearby São Conrado Fashion Mall. There are 150 stores including Prada, Armani and Calvin Klein. Choose: the dirt-cheap Havaianas; lose: the 'dirty' dental-floss bikini.





And there's snorkelling around the corals at Pirate Beach, a mere three-minute drive away. Go to Airbnb.

co.uk/rooms/2757522

Women's Health

FEATURING

KHLOE KARDASHIAN

And the plan that built her hot, new body!







Sydney, Australia FROM £26PP PER NIGHT

BEATS A HOTEL BECAUSE...

This three-level, two-bedroom terraced sandstone house with a balcony and hammock is the sort of place you can't believe exists outside of a stylish interiors magazine. And it's all yours.

IT'S A STEAL BECAUSE... It's in a picture-postcard location, a 10-minute stroll (or free shuttle-bus ride, which stops just opposite the house) from

Manly and Fairlight Beaches. **YOU WOULDN'T EXPECT...**

That a scenic ferry journey from Manly Harbour will

deposit you in the heart of Sydney in just 30 minutes. WHAT THE WEBSITE DOESN'T

TELL YOU Artworks throughout the house are collected from the host JayJay's travels. One holiday here and you'll want to redecorate your own pad immediately.

び Go to Airbnb.co.uk/rooms/2392859 ♦



12 moments of **less** in one beautiful bar

Smooth, melting Lindor in a milk chocolate bar. You choose the moment, we'll provide the bliss.



Soul food

You remember KELIS, right? Hip hop superstar, great hair, power lungs... well, she's a chef now, and has cooked up a week's worth of wholesome meals just for you

eet Kelis. Yes, the singer-songwriter behind platinum-selling hits such as Caught Out There and Trick Me. But also now a Cordon Bleutrained cook, who spent the best part of 2014 in chef whites serving up jerk ribs and sliders from a food truck, as well as launching her own TV cookery show, Saucy & Sweet. This year? She's only got one of the most exciting cookbooks of 2015 coming out: My Life On A Plate.

"I started cooking when I got out of my recording contract with [now-defunct US label] Jive," she explains. "Once that was over, I was relieved because it was the first time in my life I wasn't obligated to do something. Cooking was my way of being creative in a totally different arena."

Her mum was a chef with her own catering business, which is where Kelis developed her love of cooking. She put herself >

Kelis's kitchen playlist

"It depends on my mood, or what I'm making. When I cooked on 4 July I played gospel really loudly. But I never sit in my house and listen to my own music – never!"

Play

through the prestigious Cordon Bleu cookery school, where, she recalls, the training was "intense" – five days a week, seven hours a day and tests every day. "A class might start off with 30 people, and by the end there were only, like, 15 of us."

So how did people react to finding Kelis in their cookery class? "I think people recognised me, but it wasn't an issue," she says. "Le Cordon Bleu is very serious – people were there to learn and it's competitive. I think the excitement of having someone recognisable there died pretty quickly."

For an artist whose catalogue of hits often revolves around all things culinary (evidence 1: *Milkshake* from her album *Tasty*; and, evidence 2: 2014 album *Food*, with tracks *Breakfast* and *Friday Fish Fry*), it's not hard to spot a theme. "A lot of my music is linked to food, but it's never been a conscious thing. Food is very honest; music is less so. But they're both tough," she says. "If you're in the kitchen you might get burnt by

Kelis's store-cupboard stars

1 DECENT EQUIPMENT

"A good chef's knife and a food processor - I have loads, from Kitchen Aid to Vitamix."

2 PAPRIKA

"Add a little smoked paprika to sauces – it gives it this gorgeous natural colour and a clean, smoky flavour."

3 FLAVOURED SALTS

"They give every dish a little kick. I like hickory salt and smoked salt." a pan, but you're putting yourself out there on stage too; you'll get burnt regardless."

So come on, then, how do you make a milkshake that brings all the boys to the yard? "I have to be honest, I've never actually made a milkshake," she admits. "I don't make them, ever. I do make juices, though. I'd do a green one, with kale, spinach, ginger, coconut water and orange juice." Tasty and healthy? Definitely. Boys-to-the-yard factor? Maybe not.







Serves 6-8

> 700g assorted dried beans (eg, cannellini, black, kidney, pinto), soaked overnight and drained • ½tsp achiote paste* • 1tbsp dried basil • 2tbsp sea salt • 1tsp

black pepper • 1/4tsp cayenne pepper • 4 dried bay leaves • 2 red and 1 green pepper,

- deseeded and diced 1 poblano chilli*, deseeded and diced
- 1 Anaheim chilli (or any large, mild green chilli), deseeded and diced • 3 large tomatoes, diced
 - 2tbsp sofrito sauce** 3 carrots, thinly sliced

1 Put the beans in a large saucepan with enough water to cover. Bring to the boil, then simmer for about 30 mins until they begin to soften.

- 2 Add the achiote, basil, salt, black pepper, cayenne and bay leaves. Cook for about an hour.
- 3 Stir in the peppers, chillies, tomatoes and sofrito, and cook for about 10 mins more.
- 4 Add the carrots and cook for another 5 mins. Season to taste and serve. >

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until 29 September.

STARS

Play

Find out what the month has in store with Cosmopolitan's astrologer JESSICA ADAMS

Libra 23 SEP-22 OCT

Your status or a photo of you draws big attention on social media. A mother figure holds the key to a major question. Your past, present or potential lover is distracted now, but it's not you, it's him. Revisit an idea you once gave up on.

Scorpio 23 OCT-21 NOV

A work review brings change. You'll have fun with great male friends who have no ulterior motive. A strong bond with an animal helps you both. That thing you thought you'd fail at? Give it a go; the effort will pay off.

Sagittarius 22 NOV-21 DEC

Your group or team will be the centre of attention. Brilliant news comes from an underdog in your world. A fashion or beauty idea doesn't suit you, but points the way to something that does. That male admirer could become a friend.

Capricorn 22 DEC-19 JAN

Hard work in your special field pays off. But if your job isn't right, change is in store for 2016. A connection with a sports fan will get you closer to your goals. And a mysterious man becomes less so once you learn his love-life history.



Aquarius 20 JAN-18 FEB

You'll change your plans in relation to a far-off location. Wonderful bargains or free offers surround you. Does a fussy woman deserve your energy? A man juggling responsibility is avoiding it – tell him so. Look forward to a lovely celebration.

PISCES 19 FEB-19 MAR

Study the figures regarding banking matters or a new income source. A brother figure is confused and needs help. Surprises from an extrovert friend make your month. Your food habits will change. Snap up a transport or car deal.

Aries 20 MAR-19 APR

Social-media activity by an old, new or potential lover helps you see the truth. Disruption in your locality affects you. Don't neglect a friendship with someone who's on the move. A project you're working on will see wow-factor results.

Taurus 20 APR-20 MAY

A doctor, food guru or fitness expert will help you. Be patient with a flaky work contact who can't commit to a final outcome. A female relative will share wonderful rewards with you. The toughest love cycle in 29 years is over!

Gemini 21 MAY-20 JUN

You'll be told to follow instructions on a book or website, but your answer is better and will benefit your work life. A friend needs your advice on a big issue. Questions regarding kids are answered. Prepare for great travel options in 2016.

Cancer 21.1UN-22.1UI

You'll find out where you stand with your house, family or flatmate. An old friend changes her life and you must tune in – or else. Fantastic new ways to save or make money crop up. Persist with that project that needs fine-tuning.

Leo 23 JUL-22 AUG

Your internet or media plans draw useful online feedback. A man with religious conflicts intrigues you. An unexpected change of mind by a work contact benefits you. And you will recycle an old beauty or fashion idea perfectly.

Virgo 23 AUG-22 SEP

Your money rut ends for good, helped by a brilliant idea. A man who is too far away to get involved will use Skype instead. A negative woman in your circle doesn't fit; distance yourself. The right house or flat solution works magic.

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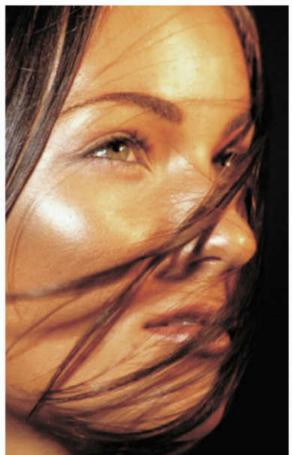






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(hereafter referred to as Participant 1) and

(hereafter Participant 2), to engage in a one-night stand (hereafter the ONS).

ENTRY TO PROPERTY

On arrival at Participant 1's residence, Participant 2 will overlook the fact that her bathroom features more super heavy flow tampons than scented candles. In turn, on arrival at Participant 2's residence, Participant 1 will admire his strategically placed guitar.

Appendix: Under no circumstances should said guitar be played.

2 REMOVAL OF GARMENTS
On seeing Participant 1 naked, acceptable responses include: admiring glances, stroking and appreciative noises. Phrases including (but not limited to), 'I love a woman with something to grab hold of,' and, 'Where have your boobs gone?' are prohibited. In return, Participant 1 agrees to gasp when Participant 2 removes his boxers, and not dwell on why they were being worn inside out.

O SEX: PROHIBITED ITEMS

Under no circumstances may the following be used: a) cameraphone b) cuddly toys c) foodstuffs d) stopwatch.

POST COITUS

Acceptable topics of post-coital conversation include: a) Why it's weird you were in the bar/club you met in, because you're usually at [insert name of much cooler bar/club] b) Netflix and c) Nando's vs KFC. Under no circumstances shall either party ask, 'So what are you doing tomorrow, then?'

THE MORNING AFTER

Participant 2 must pretend to be asleep while Participant 1 gets up to a) brush teeth and b) deal with residual makeup issues. Should the bathroom be en suite, Participant 1 reserves the right to run the tap forcefully, thus assisting with the inevitable Shy Pee Syndrome.

SUDDEN-ONSET AMNESIA

O Should either party forget the other's name, they are permitted to ascertain it by rifling through their bag/pockets/mail while the other is in the kitchen YouTubing 'how to make perfect scrambled eggs'.

EXITING THE ONS

Be aware that before leaving the ONS, the visiting participant is likely to encounter the other's a) housemate b) elderly neighbour c) parents or d) (if you're really unlucky) partner. In all circumstances, it is obligatory for the participant to say something stupid that they will later regret.

EXCHANGE OF NUMBERS

O Participant 2 is obliged to request Participant 1's number. Both parties acknowledge that this is an act of goodwill rather than an expression of intention.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Under no circumstances will either party: a) Send the other a Facebook friend request. b) Follow the other on Twitter or Instagram. Appendix: A reasonable degree of stalking via social media immediately after the ONS is acceptable.

UNFORTUNATE RESIGHTING

Should the participants encounter one another in future, each reserves the right to barely acknowledge the other's existence. Exceptions to this clause: a) If either party has a partner in tow, even a slight nod of the head is a breach of protocol.

b) If anyone who saw them hook up is in the vicinity, participants must greet each other as if the sex they had together was unsurpassed.

(Participant 1)

Signed: (Participant 2)



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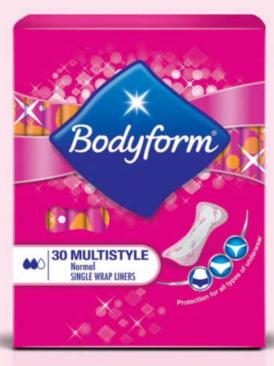
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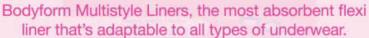












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